BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

FUNDAMENTALS OF INDIAN ART

S. N. Dasgupta

GENERAL EDITORS

K. M. MUNSHI

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BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN, BOMBAY

Bharatiya Shiksha
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7. The technique of Bharatiya Shiksha must involve—

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(b) the adoption by the student of the *Shishya* attitude by the development of—

(i) respect for the teacher,

(ii) a spirit of inquiry,

(iii) a spirit of service towards the teacher, the institution, Bharata and Bharatiya Vidya.

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FUNDAMENTALS OF INDIAN ART

BY

Prof. SURENDRA NATH DASGUPTA

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GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan—that Institute of Indian Culture in Bombay—needed a Book University, a series of books which, if read, would serve the purpose of providing higher education. Particular emphasis, however, was to be put on such literature as revealed the deeper impulsions of India. As a first step, it was decided to bring out in English 100 books, 50 of which were to be taken in hand almost at once. Each book was to contain from 200 to 250 pages and was to be priced at Rs. 1-12-0.

It is our intention to publish the books we select, not only in English; but also in the following Indian languages: Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

This scheme, involving the publication of 900 volumes, requires ample funds and an all-India organisation. The Bhavan is exerting its utmost to supply them.

The objectives for which the Bhavan stands are the reintegration of the Indian culture in the light of modern knowledge and to suit our present-day needs and the resuscitation of its fundamental values in their pristine vigour.

Let me make our goal more explicit:

We seek the dignity of man, which necessarily implies the creation of social conditions which would allow him freedom to evolve along the lines of his own temperament and capacities; we seek the harmony of individual efforts and social relations, not in any makeshift way, but within the frame-work of the

Moral Order; we seek the creative art of life, by the alchemy of which human limitations are progressively transmuted, so that man may become the instrument of God, and is able to see Him in all and all in Him.

The world, we feel, is too much with us. Nothing would uplift or inspire us so much as the beauty and aspiration which such books can teach.

In this series, therefore, the literature of India, ancient and modern, will be published in a form easily accessible to all. Books in other literatures of the world, if they illustrate the principles we stand for, will also be included.

This common pool of literature, it is hoped, will enable the reader, eastern or western, to understand and appreciate currents of world thought, as also the movements of the mind in India, which, though they flow through different linguistic channels, have a common urge and aspiration.

Fittingly, the Book University's first venture is the *Mahabharata*, summarised by one of the greatest living Indians, C. Rajagopalachari; the second work is on a section of it; the *Gita* by H. V. Divatia, an eminent jurist and a student of philosophy. Centuries ago, it was proclaimed of the *Mahabharata*: 'What is not in it, is nowhere'. After twenty-five centuries, we can use the same words about it. He who knows it not, knows not the heights and depths of the soul; he misses the trials and tragedy and the beauty and grandeur of life.

The *Mahabharata* is not a mere epic; it is a romance, telling the tale of heroic men and women and of some who were divine; it is a whole literature in itself, containing a code of life, a philosophy of social

and ethical relations, and speculative thought on human problems that is hard to rival; but, above all, it has for its core the *Gita*, which is, as the world is beginning to find out, the noblest of scriptures and the grandest of sagas in which the climax is reached in the wondrous Apocalypse in the Eleventh Canto.

Through such books alone the harmonies underlying true culture, I am convinced, will one day reconcile the discords of modern life.

I thank all those who have helped to make this new branch of the Bhavan's activity successful.

1, Queen Victoria Road,
New Delhi,
3rd October, 1951.

K. M. MUNSHI

PREFACE

In 1939 just before the second world war, my husband, the late Prof. S. N. Dasgupta, had been invited to Italy. He had been invited many times before, in 1924, 1930, 1935, 1936. In 1936 the International Congress of Science was holding its session in Rome. The night before the first meeting of the Congress, he was invited by the president to dinner and the conversation related to the development of science and India's contribution thereto. The president suggested that next morning, instead of the topic proposed already for him, he should talk on the concept of science in Ancient India.

My husband came back to his hotel and thought over this. He had no books of reference with him. But this was no serious obstacle. All his life, not withstanding the enormous amount of research he had been doing, he seldom made any notes. His memory was wonderful and unique. He carried all details and references, no matter however varied the field, in his head. So he exercised his mind that night and decided that since space, time and matter were the fundamentals that science had to deal with, he would talk on these. He then went to sleep peacefully without a second thought about this science meeting.

Next morning the Science Congress sat with all the leading scientists of the world taking part in it. Professor Dasgupta was the first speaker to address the gathering and the time allotted was the usual limit of fifteen minutes. He began his speech, it went on and on; fifteen minutes passed into an hour, and the hour passed into two and then to three without any interruption. The whole of the morning session was

occupied in listening to what scientific concepts had been formulated by the Indian mind without any of the modern equipments. The audience listened spell-bound to this new side of Indian culture. He had spoken several times before on Indian philosophy and religion, but this time it was science. After his speech was over, one or two of the British scientists asked him two or three questions which were duly answered. The sitting came to an end amidst tremendous applause and loud acclamation 'great man' 'great man' (*grando homo*).

It was the same year that the Senate of Rome decided to honour him with the honorary degree of D. Litt. Before this they had conferred this only on their king. As a result he was invited again in 1939 to receive the degree and to lecture on Indian art. He had delivered lectures already on Indian philosophy, religion and science. Now it was to be on art through which our countrymen had expressed their concept of beauty, the inner spiritual vision through line, colour, painting and carving of stones.

So this was the occasion for which these lectures on Indian Art were written and when they were delivered. I remember distinctly when he was writing them, how they filled our heart with a unique thrill at the revelation of the inner principles that lay in our perception of beauty and its communication. But he translated them also into Italian as he intended to deliver them in the language of the people he was going to address. He knew besides Sanskrit, Bengali, Hindi and English, two continental languages, German and French very well; this time he was brushing up his Italian. He reached Italy in April 1939, and was accorded a state reception and military honours in

Rome. Mussolini was in power at the time. His son-in-law, Count Ciano, received him on behalf of the state. The convocation in which the degree of D. Litt. was conferred upon him, was filmed and exhibited all over the country. It was a unique honour shown to one of the eminent sons of India, which was still in bondage. During the same summer he delivered his Lectures on Indian Art in Rome. I refer here to an interlude simply to describe the liveliness of the gathering. As the Professor began his first lecture, he said, besides the usual words of courtesy, how he loved Italy only next to India. He said: "My first love and loyalty goes naturally to my mother-country, India; but the second goes to Italy, the ancient seat of wisdom and beauty, which has endeared herself so much to me by so many ties of association, and it is a known fact that the second love is always stronger than the first". The audience roared with laughter at this lively witticism.

Had it not been for the war which set in almost immediately after his return to India in August, these lectures might have been published long ago. The terrible war came and so many post-war calamities followed which made publication so very difficult. My husband's health broke down in 1940 and since then he was ailing from heart troubles, though heroically continuing his quest for knowledge. In 1950 we came to Lucknow from England and my husband was still working in his sick-bed on the completion of the fifth volume of his 'History of Indian Philosophy'. Shri K. M. Munshi became Governor of U.P. in 1952 and his sincere interest and regard for Indian culture drew him to my husband's bedside in September when they had some talk on the subject of their mutual interest.

Since October, 1952, there was a serious turn in the illness of my husband; and the great life that was still burning for learning and knowledge, passed away after a brief gleam of recovery in December, 1952.

My husband had written a letter to Shri K. M. Munshi, the Rajyapal, U. P. about his unpublished manuscripts, and it is through the Rajyapal's very kind and sympathetic assistance that this small book is being published. My gratefulness to Shri K. M. Munshi cannot be adequately expressed. I join him in humility and reverence in the sacred task of showing our deepest respect for the departed by bringing out his message to the world. The 'Introduction' to the book has been based on the author's own Introductory chapter to his work on Aesthetics written in Bengali.

Lucknow,
May 2, 1953

(Mrs.) Surama Dasgupta

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT is beauty and what forms its constituent: this problem has not been discussed to a very great length in the works of art. Jagannatha, a writer on aesthetics, of the seventeenth century introduced the use of the term 'ramaniya' in the sense of beautiful and defined literature as that which brought out the sense of the beautiful in a fit consonance of words and their meaning. But he did not go far into the discussion. In explaining the term 'beautiful' he said, that which induces a unique feeling of pleasure which is different from all other joys and therefore, has something of a transcendental element in it, is called beautiful. In trying to describe the nature of this extraordinary delight, he further said that it was not confined to the ordinary utilitarian pleasure; it was absolutely beyond any personal joy and personal emotion; it was universal. It is a delightful state of knowledge having the movement of a cognitive state in it; at the same time it has an end to realise. It is a creative movement of the mind leading to the creation or the realisation of an object impregnated with an emotive thrill. The sense of the beautiful is, according to Jagannatha, essentially an emotional thrill. This experience is different from all other experiences of pleasure and it brings its own testimony direct and invincible. It is not known by any ordinary means of knowledge, but it is directly intuited and is universal in its nature. Besides this emotional thrill, there are some obscure, shadowy impressions which are stirred up by the aesthetic activity of the mind. Jagannatha did not probe into it further. But he distinguished it from the traditional sentiment known as 'rasa' which is supposed to be aesthetic pleasure derived from literary

and other types of art creation and communication. He says, there may be many kinds of literary composition which can just give a mild excitation of the mind without inducing the deeper emotions or 'rasa'. This enjoyment may have the touch of the beautiful but is different from the emotion or 'rasa' in the technical sense.

Beauty lies in the experience of a particular type of harmony. It is not possible to define it, but we can give some kind of description. Rabindranath said that which gives us joy without any sense of utility is the sense of beauty. This is, of course, a well-accepted proposition, but this does not lead us far. In the experience of ordinary delight there is the satisfaction of getting something, realisation of some fulfilment. But there may be some kind of desire or want also associated with the delight of beauty. But this feeling of want is very much internal. The satisfaction that one feels in aesthetic pleasure does not come out of the fulfilment of some particular desire or need; but when it is there, there may come the desire for more. It is not easy to say why beauty gives us joy. In all instances of ordinary joy we find mostly some kind of satisfaction of realising our desired ends or objects. Still it is not true that this desire or our wanting something is very marked here also on the level of normal and practical life; there may be, so often, the joy of the unexpected. When all on a sudden we receive a present, a promotion in a job, we do feel happy, though there was no marked desire for them. It seems, therefore, that even in the case of ordinary happiness relating to things of utility, there may not be present any distinct demand for them. But, perhaps, far in the recesses of our heart there may have been deep-laid

impresses of desires which are called up by such occasions. We have desire of money, lift in a job and the like, though not always in a distinct manner, and it is these root tendencies of the mind which find some kind of response and satisfaction when the suitable occasion comes and makes us feel happy. In the case of aesthetic delight, however, it is difficult to point to any definite set of conditions which induce it.

The causal conditions for such aesthetic states may be internal, external, or both. It has to be admitted that there must be some particular combination of situation which causes the appreciation of beauty and the happiness consequent upon it. If it is supposed that in our hearts we have dim-lit desire for this particular combination of conditions which induce a particular aesthetic state and when this desire is fulfilled, there comes a unique feeling of satisfaction, and it is this satisfaction that we call the joy of beauty, then this supposition, indeed, becomes irrefutable.

A particular emotion, an idea, presses for expression in the poet's mind. This longing has no definite form, but still it is a deep longing of the heart. The poet tries to express it by a suitable arrangement of words, by rhythm, by metre. He may revise his composition, may make additions and alterations. Still the point becomes clear that he is trying to express something which is in his mind in an indefinite form and pressing for expression. When he can succeed in doing that, he feels an exhilaration that he has been able to manifest this formless urge into proper shape and form, and realises that he has created beauty and enjoys the pleasure of creation as also of appreciation of his art. The painter likewise tries to give expression to some indefinable ideal of beauty in his heart

and cannot be satisfied until and unless his external drawing is in consonance with the internal picture he has. Leonardo da Vinci painted the picture of his beloved for four years, yet he could not feel satisfied that he had been able to do it to perfection. The king Dushyanta drew a picture of Shakuntala and was dissatisfied all the time that he could not represent her exquisite grace in lines and colours.

So we see that (behind all art-creation there is an emotional urge to give form to some dimly felt or perceived experience. When this urge comes up to some extent to the conscious level, there starts a creative process behind the half-drawn curtain in the various deep-laid, half-sleeping states and tendencies of the mind. The poet or the artist feels an indefinable longing which he cannot grasp by the rational process of his mind, yet he feels a deep vibratory impulse behind the conceptual structure of understanding. This impulse forces upon him words, colours or symphony of tunes in due succession and he starts selecting from among them, as they are, in harmony both among themselves as also with this creative impulse.) Thus by selection, alteration and the like, when this process becomes complete and the artist perceives that vague, indefinite, spiritual outline manifested in the definite concrete form of his mind and also in the external creation, he feels a unique satisfaction. Though he had not grasped the form or image which he tried to express or create when he had felt a formless emotional urge to do so, still he can recognise in his fully expressed work of art, that half-lit, shadowy ideal of his mind and feels thrilled.

How the conscious mind helps to create a definite picture of the shadowy subconscious image or emotion,

is very difficult to ascertain. There is, all the same, some kind of logic in this process, the mysterious working of which is not known to the artist himself, but which nevertheless helps him to create. With reference to this, Rabindranath said in one of his poems that he could not describe the nature of this mysterious working which was there all the time. It appeared to be something beyond him, but at the same time directing his impulse in a definite way in order to enable him to give form and shape to the intuited vision within. It is this intuited vision that seeks expression in colour, form and sound, pulsating with an emotional vibration from within, sets the whole being of the artist in motion and guides it by some kind of inner logic, inherent teleology, so to speak, that makes the artist create objects of beauty in art. The outer world may judge the piece of art only by the execution of external forms, the skill shown therein; but who would say that it is the correct estimate of value? Is it not in the deeper picture within, reflected directly on the mental canvas of the artist, the first and full glow of that vision, the dawn that lights up his entire horizon, that the real beauty and its joy lie? Only a fragment of it can be expressed in skilful combination of words, colours, carvings and musical symphony.

If we try to analyse our conscious mind, we find two kinds of operations: one, based on perceptual forms and the other on logical activity. By the latter we bind together the piece-meal observations into particular relation. Whenever we say the flower is red, milk is white, we tie up together our separate concepts of flower, milk, and their attributes, all in one form of cognition. We ignore their separateness and

unite and order them into a unitary form of cognition; by this we shift them to another plane. This relationing activity of the mind is not confined to this unifying process of substance and attributes, but also applies to the construction of propositions and their arrangements leading to their literary composition. Perception of things can also be distinguished from logical activity in this, that the former can take in a wider range of things, a vast area in one unitary grasp while the latter cannot. When we see a flower, the main emphasis may be on its colour, but at the same time we are seeing its petals, their organic relation to each other, the unique whole in its loveliness and grace and also something else surrounding it; a long, dim, hazy corridor of penumbra is also reflected through the sense organs. It takes in one particular point in space as also the almost entire setting surrounding it.

The logical process takes note of the universal. Though it is based on our observation of particulars, yet the generic concept, derived from them, is very different. It may be asked that if the particulars are divested of their particularities, then what remains of them? It may be said in reply that as in perception many particular attributes or relations make themselves subordinate and forgo their independence to make some one aspect or object prominent in view, so also, in the case of rational apperception all peculiar specific properties of the particular object forgo their own emphasis on difference and point to one dominant feature of similarity that runs through them all. We have to fall back upon this conceptual process in order to understand the perceived object. We perceive the flower; but in order to be able to grasp or understand it more fully, we

have to analyse it, that it is white, its petals have been arranged in a semi-circular fashion, they form different clusters, there is the yellow pollen and so on and thus arrive at a generalised concept of totality or the whole coming out of them. All this analysis comes out of our logical mode of thinking. So it appears that without perception one cannot get the materials for rational activity of the mind and without rational analysis we cannot understand properly the structure and the related parts of the object perceived. Logic reveals a new truth about the object perceived in that new light which appears to be so very different from itself when taken in by pure and simple perception.

Both perception and logical analysis depend to a great extent on previous impressions. The subconscious store-house of impression and memory is a great asset in the building up of our inner personality. By a specific use of these impressions and ordering them into newer and newer relations with fresh facts, we are always advancing and enriching ourselves through new experiences. The personality formed by this impact and co-ordination of freshly registered experiences with the old impress is really a concrete and deep-laid structure of our being. This solid structure of our personality may have different layers or levels and may in their turn be called so many smaller personalities with their specific functions. We can split the total personality into different selves, the biological, intellectual and the like which have their respective functions, but act in mutual association and in an inter-dependent manner.

In cases of recognition and memory, the subconscious impressions registered at the time of their experiences

are roused up by a suitable stimulus and we say 'Oh, I remember it'. We collect the impresses along with the temporal and spatial characters. Sometimes these impresses, be they of objects or emotions, are stored up in a certain level of the mind dissociated from any temporal or spatial characters. This generic impression is called up whenever there is any similar experience and feeds the relevant emotions or cognitions and makes them stronger and clearer. In this mental plane which is beyond that of ordinary memory images we store the general impress of so many things we have experienced and enjoyed, quite apart from the particular objects through which we had experienced them. Many a time we had seen in nature blending of lines, play of colours, and heard sweet symphony of music. In this mysterious store-house which takes no account of the particular place and time in which they were experienced, we have them in a very subtle and indefinable way embedded therein. Whenever there is any new occasion, they are stirred up and recalled in that imageless way and give a thrill of mute recognition and the whole inner personality feels joy at that. That is how we exclaim, 'O, how beautiful is this', and feel happy. The previously acquired impress of harmony, an essential accompaniment of the sense of beauty, gets up as it were from its slumbers, coalesces with the new fact of perception, and lends a charm through subconscious recognition or self-realisation; and this satisfaction of realising the once-felt harmony of tunes, colours, lines, etc. appears again as aesthetic joy. That is why we cannot answer how it is that an object strikes us as beautiful, because beauty is realised in an indefinable way or rather recognised in a manner beyond time and space limitations. They were

there in the mind and we get them over again. This renewal of acquaintance brings with it a thrill or a unique feeling of joy; yet this is not memory nor recognition in the ordinary sense.

From our childhood we are used to see a mixture of colour in nature, the playful blending of light and shade, to hear songs of the birds, and the dancing rhythm of the streams; all gave us delight and left their shadowy marks behind somewhere attuned with the whole personality. Whenever there are newer occasions of similar experience, our mind finds a harmony between them and the latent impress laid deep into the inner concrete personality; and this strikes us as beautiful and sounds the note of joy accompanying it in the deep-laid chords of our heart. This is known as the revelation of the beautiful and the joy of beauty. When the artist's personality is gifted with a deeper creative apperception and impulse, the thrill of beauty does not end here, but surcharges his whole being with unique emotions and movement, till he can find proper expression in images and forms of the external world of this revelation of the beautiful in him; this is the secret of art-creation described before. When this creation, again, suffuses another mind with similar emotions of rapture, this is known as art-communication.

Each nation has a particular genius of its own, and therefore a particular way of self-expression. The Indian mind expressed its feelings of beauty in a way which suited the temperament and ideals of its people. They had always valued spiritual concepts and love of nature more than anything else. So we find in the apperception and creation of the beautiful, nature plays an important role; and in the painting

of deities and human beings, the inner dominant character overflows the created forms. This inner apperception of beauty, the subtle and mysterious way of self-expression of Indian mind has been unfolded here in the present work in its richness and variety of a very unique nature.

Lecture I

SPECIAL FEATURES OF INDIAN ART

If we look at the plastic creations of Greece, we find that the conception of Greek gods was the idealisation of forms of human beauty. The Greek gods represented in themselves the ideal perfection of human beauty. They did not involve any superior ideal or connote any superior meaning. The case, however, is different in India. Here, though the gods are mostly human figures, they are not conceived on the pattern or types of human beauty. Their forms do not always resemble human forms. Thus, the goddess Durga has ten hands, the god Siva has five faces, the god Brahma has four faces and so on. The difference may be further illustrated by the fact that in India the artists who deal with plastic art or painting have to follow a certain model as prescribed in the verbal description of 'dhyana'. In the representation of the different gods, Hindu or Buddhist, the word 'dhyana' means the meditation of a devotee. The religious books contain prescriptions as to how one should try to form a mental picture of a god or when one should concentrate his attention in an unflinching manner. This concentration of attention or meditation forms the *sine qua non* of the worship of the gods. Ordinarily our minds cannot easily be kept steady on any particular object of interest. They continually slip off to other objects. 'Dhyana' is the process of inner efforts by which a person tries to control the movement of his mind and to keep it steady on one point. A satisfactory performance of dhyana leads to samadhi. In this state the mind of the meditator becomes one, as it were, with the object. The meditator becomes insensible to all

other objects, either of the sensory field or of the field of imagination. At this stage no effort is required. The meditator's mind ceases to have any content before it other than the object on which he was trying to concentrate his mind by dhyana. In order that one may perform the dhyana of any particular god, it was, therefore, necessary that he should be able to form a visual image in his mind. The nature of this visual image is described in the scriptures. It was the business of those who dealt in plastic art to follow this description and to create plastic forms accordingly.

Let us take an example. In the dhyana delineation, god Siva is described in the scriptures as follows :—

"One should always meditate the great Lord (Mahesa) as a silver mountain, adorned by crescent moon, with his limbs bright like gems, holding in his hands an axe, an animal and indicating the posture of giving a boon and offering courage against fear. He is seated on the lotus in a blissful attitude. He is adored by all the immortal beings and is wearing the hide of a tiger. By his appearance, it seems, that he is the seed of which the universe is a plant and that he is the ultimate reality of the universe. His very appearance removes fear from us all. He is with five faces and three eyes."

It will be evident from the description that though the Lord Siva has human appearance, he does not possess a form which can be called human. No human being possesses five faces and three eyes. His appearance cannot be regarded in any sense as being the idealisation of any human body. It is also not enough that in the representation of god Siva, one should form a human body associated with five faces and three eyes. Each god stands as the plastic line or

colour-expression of a particular type of idea. It is the duty of the meditator to pass through the physical image of the represented deity and to enter into the spiritual essence or idea for which he stands and which beams through his physical expression. The meditator must, in the end, bring himself into communion with this spiritual idea which the physical image is supposed to express. Through meditation, the physical expression would gradually lose its physical character. It will be endowed with a transparency which cannot obstruct the passage of the mind in coming into union or communion with the spiritual idea underlying the plastic representation.

It will thus be evident that the object of the plastic artist in India, in representing gods, was not to imitate the excellence or beauty of human forms, as in the case of the Greeks, but to give expression to a spiritual message that the forms of gods were intended to impart. In representing human beauty also, the idea of beauty was drawn not by the idealisation of human forms but by a reference to the appeal of beauty that we have from nature. Thus Kalidasa, in attempting to describe the beauty of Parvati, says, that all her limbs were created by God in consonance with all that is beautiful in Nature. The Greeks were more or less insensible to the beauty of Nature. But the Indian mind sought the expression of Nature for its ideal conception of beauty. Thus the Yaksha of Kalidasa in the "Meghaduta" in pouring out the effusions of his love-laden heart to the cloud, which was asked to bear his message to his long separated wife, says as follows :—

"I try to satisfy my soul by trying to discover the expression of your beauteous limbs in the beauty of

Nature, but your beauty excels them so much that I fail to do so. I look at the creepers to discover the grace of your form and movement, I look at the eyes of the startled deer to find similarity with your lovely glances; I look at the moon to discover in it the shadow of your face, the feathers of the peacock for their similarity with your hair, the fine ripples of the river for their similarity with your dancing eyes, but I am sorry that they are so inferior to the beauties of your limbs and expressions that I can discover no similarity between your beauty and the beauty of Nature."

In the "Kumarasambhava" also, Parvati is described as having been formed with all the elements of beauty that are found in Nature. The nymph Tilottama is also described as having been formed with all the best elements of beauty that are available therein.

In Indian literature human beauty has thus the beauty of Nature for its ideal. The Yaksha in seeking for the similarity of the beauty of his beloved did not look for it in any idealised expression of human beauty, but in the beauties of nature and in his excess of partiality for his wife, he felt that the beauty of his wife far excelled the beauties of Nature. He thus sought for an idealisation of natural beauty for giving an expression of her super-excellent human beauty. The Greeks on the other hand, conceived the highest excellence of beauty by idealising and collecting together all that appeared most beautiful in the different parts of a human body. With them the idealised human body was the standard of beauty, while with the Indians it was the idealised Nature that was regarded as the highest standard.

But, though, in the conception of human forms, the expressions of Nature were regarded as a standard, yet in the expressions of the beauty of the gods, the Indians did not always take Nature as the standard of beauty. The gods were regarded not as divine human beings, but as external expressions in plastic and in colour forms of spiritual ideas or spiritual messages. On the one hand, they drew inspiration from Nature for their conception of beauty, and on the other they tried to externalise in plastic and colour forms the subjective ideals and spiritual longings. For this reason the form of the deity as realised in meditative intuition was verbally recorded as far as possible and it was the duty of the plastic artists to represent it in visual forms also. Thus the meditative intuition on the one hand translated itself into visual forms and on the other, the visual representation on the basis of the mental intuition sought for to be realised by meditation by the novice who proceeded on the path of meditation.

Kalidasa, in describing the beauty of Shakuntala, says: The creator must have first conceived the form of Shakuntala in its entirety, and then had inspired the intuited image of the heart with life and externalised it in the visible form of Shakuntala; and he must have assembled together in his mind all the elements of beauty and created her by the assemblage of them all as a mental creation.

Thus we find that the great literary artist Kalidasa thought that supreme beauty can only be created by mental intuition. In another place in the "Shakuntala", Kalidasa, in describing the nature of the painted representation of Shakuntala by Dushyanta, says that by graceful delineation Dushyanta has been able to give

an expression of his personality and emotion with which the form of Shakuntala was intuited in his mind and that this was the secret of the charm of painting. We thus see that one of the most important elements of plastic and pictorial art is the mental intuition or vision by which anything is conceived and intuited in the mind with the emotive personality of the artist. This intuition is of the nature of 'dhyana' or meditation in which the artist melts his personality in the emotive vision or intuition of the object of his representation which may be a spiritual idea or a physical form.

It will be wrong, however, to think that since externalisation of an inwardly conceived mental intuition forms the secret of Indian art, the Indian artists are, as a rule, insensible to the realities of the objective world, faithfulness to which may be regarded as an indispensable necessity. Referring again to the remarks in the "Shakuntala" regarding the pictorial representation of Shakuntala by Dushyanta, we find that the bee moving round the face of Shakuntala was so nicely painted that the Jester considered it to be a real bee and was going to strike it with a stick. The spatial perspective of the rough and uneven hilly land was also so faithfully drawn that the rugged character was clearly manifested in the painting. The poet Kalidasa also considers that the composition of the painting formed an essential part of all pictorial representations. We find also that the Indian artists never abstracted the main subject of representation from the environment of which it formed a part. Thus going back to the representation of Shakuntala by Dushyanta, we find first of all that King Dushyanta selected Shakuntala in association with her two companions, Anasuya and Priyamvada in the hermitage of

Kanva. He chose that particular moment of Shakuntala's posture when a bee was running after her and in fear of it she had lost all reserve and appeared to be in a state of mild agitation which led her to move about. This revealed to Dushyanta who was watching her from a hiding place, the rhythmic grace of her motion. The moment was particularly favourable; for, at the very first sight of this beautiful lady with the rhythmic grace of her movements and the superb charm of her delicate features, King Dushyanta was enraptured with the emotion of love. But the king did not stop here. He wanted to give a setting to the picture by delineating the Himalayas with the river Malini flowing by it and pairs of ducks sitting idly on the sandy banks, the colour of the sand being in harmony with the colour of the feather of the ducks; the deer grazing and ruminating idly on the hilly ground under the trees, from the branches of which were hanging the birch garments of the ascetics of the hermitage; and under its shadow the she-deer touching the eye of her mate with her horn as an expression of love and tenderness. Thus the whole composition and the distribution of the landscape were regarded as an indispensable setting. Thus, under the sombre and grave shadow of the Himalayas, representing in itself the high ideal of the saintly life of Kanva, there flowed the tender love that manifested itself among the birds and the beasts, and in the budding love of Shakuntala which is being nurtured by the whole nature around her. That man was a part of nature is evident also from the description of Shakuntala in the 4th act where all the trees of the hermitage were in sympathy and love with Shakuntala and made their offerings to her as parting greetings. When we first meet Shakuntala

in her garden, we find that she and her companions regarded the trees and creepers as being endowed with human emotions and their companionship was for her a thing of joy for ever.

Here we see that the Indian ideal of pictorial representation differs widely from that of the Greeks. With the Greeks man was super-important, and nature played an insignificant part, and was therefore neglected. In India, however, man is regarded as a part of nature and the representation of man or of gods was indispensably associated with the representation of such lovely forms of nature as could be in harmony with it. On the one hand, faithfulness to nature and natural forms was attended to and, on the other hand, it was transcended by the inner intuitive vision, throbbing with the emotive personality of the artist. The emotive realisation, as revealed in intuition or meditation, had also to be curbed by the artist by the realisation of the tune of the external nature with which the inner perception must be in harmony. If man is a part of nature, like flower in the creeper, or the green foliage of the trees, the spirit of them both must be so realised that the one may not be in conflict with the other. But at the same time the object of the artist is not only to be faithful to nature, but to transcend it. This transcendence is an inevitable consequence of the fact that the objects of representation must first be ideally conceived and steeped in the emotion and inner intuition of the artist. This latter fact involves the element of human contributions without which there cannot be any creation. Art does not mean merely the copying of nature, but creating nature from out of the creative contributions of one's own personality. On the one hand the artist must

grasp the truth and meaning in the objective form in relation to the objective nature in and through which it revealed itself and, on the other hand, the soul of the artist must pour down its own ambrosia so that the work of art may be both natural and spiritual. It is here that the streams of inner and outer life mingle together; the art of the artist is not a representation of merely a static and inert existence, but a representation of the streams of life flowing through man and nature which, though parcelled out or taken in piece under the necessity of pictorial representation, suggested from within its limits, a beyond from which it came and a beyond to which it flowed. It was a representation of life, snapped in the flow. In and through its limited expression it indicated its eternal flow from the spiritual to the external, and from the external to the spiritual. The technique of the artist in composition, spatial perspective and selection, all contributed to this end. As in the case of the representation of living beings or objects of nature we have an effusion from the mind overflowing it, so in the representation of the spiritual ideals and the forms of God, we have an effusion of external nature as spiritually conceived showing the harmony of spiritual ideas with objects of nature. There is hardly any representation of a god without an object of nature being associated with it either as a flower, a creeper, a bird or an animal.

In the canons of Indian art there is a definite and prescribed proportion of the limbs and their ratio to one another. This proportion and ratio are technically called 'tala'. The Indian artist used the measurement of the head as the standard of measurement. We find that Leonardo da Vinci in his "Treatise on Painting"

also takes the head as the standard of measurement and all other limbs of the body are supposed to bear a definite ratio to it. The Indian artist paid more attention to the ratio than to the actual standard of measurement of the different limbs. The ratio being the same, figures may be pigmy or colossal. A standard measurement, however, was in vogue, and according to it the head of a human body was supposed to consist of twelve 'angulis', an 'anguli' being equivalent to three-fourth of an inch. The proportion that each particular limb, the hands, the feet, the fingers, the ears, the eyes, and the nose, bore to the standard length of the head, has been described in detail in the "Vishnudharmottarapurana." Each artist had to be faithful to the prescribed ratio of the limbs to the head. That this ratio should change with the movement and the different postures of the body was also known to the Indian artist. The manner of this change of ratio has also been mentioned in the "Chitrasutra." According to the "Chitrasutra", the drawing of the pictorial representation, i.e. its delineation in harmoniously flowing lines, has been regarded as a most important factor. The "Chitrasutra" further says that though perfect drawing is regarded as most essential by the learned scholars of art, yet the real connoisseurs of art think that graceful posture or grace of expression is the most important thing in art. Women, however, appreciate over-ornamentation in art, and the common people appreciate display of colours.

It may be remembered that Indian art had attained a high degree of excellence in the plastic representation from the 2nd century B.C. and from the 3rd and 4th century A.D. in the pictorial sphere as represented in the Ajanta caves and elsewhere. When we care-

fully consider the essential features of Indian art in the plastic or pictorial representations, we find another important and essential feature which demands our serious consideration. This important characteristic of Indian art may be regarded as suggestivity or an implied significance. Over and above the ordinary implied revelation of an artistic creation in the representation of the images of the Buddha or of the gods we have various kinds of gestures of hand and fingers (mudra) which bear definite meanings and are symbolical in their nature. Dr. S. Kramrisch speaking of them says, "From its intransitive experience it is turned, with open palm, in the transitive reassurance, which the presence of the divinity gives to the devotee. The gesture, in its origin and act, exists now in the timeless state in which it established itself. It is unchangeable in the duration of its being. In this fixed position it is vibrant with life, artistically potent and not a dead symbol. The rhythmical life-movement pulses through its palm and fingers in telling curves and full modelling." (Indian Sculpture"—p.57). Dr. Kramrisch further says "Every scene or image becomes a 'vahana' and every part of it, subordinated to that aspect, is transferred according to its meaning within, and in relation to the whole.......where everything has its bearing in a context that results from artistic creations, and is yet meant to indicate an existence unchangeable in the duration of its action, every part of the compositional unity must be unmistakable with regard to its suggested purport, and has to be rationalised" (*Ibid.* pp. 57-58).

The delineation of the suggested idea of the artist and a symbolical representation of the inexpressible spiritual qualities in the symbolic language of art be-

came very patent in the pictorial or plastic representation of gods or superhuman personalities. The representation of a superhuman person like the Buddha should be such that it should express the superhuman sublimity, grace and excellence of the person. The different parts of the representation should be subordinated to the effect that is to be produced by the work as a whole. In such an art the main expression is of the whole. In other cases we find other types of symbolic expressions. Thus the dignity of motherhood in the woman was expressed in the fullness of her breasts and the hips. Thus even Sarasvati, the mother muse, was delineated as almost stooping with the fullness of her breasts. This delineation is not a mere whim of the artist, but is the idealised realisation of the deity in the 'dhyana' or the meditation of the devotee. By associating a figure with many hands, heads or eyes, the artists symbolise through them superhuman or supernatural energy, power or vision. Thus the goddess Durga is supposed to have ten hands and a third eye. While the ten hands with weapons in them, and with one of them suggesting peace and benediction, implied her great destructive power for the establishment of peace and happiness, her extra third eye indicated her powers of intuitive vision that extended far into the infinitude of the cosmic process and its internal harmony with the spiritual reality of man and his destiny. Sometimes a human figure was drawn in a manner which was unlike that of an ordinary human form, yet in spite of its difference from the ordinary human form, it was impregnated with the idea of the artist that overflowed and endowed it with the reality of life. Dr. Kramrisch in referring to this aspect says, "It is not scientific in the sense

of observation and description of its structure, but it is suggestive of the vital currents that percolate the entire living frame, which in relation to them is secondary and conditioned. Innervation, the nervous tension of the body, expressive of animal vitality and of emotions is relaxed. In this soothed condition it lies dormant. Its capacity being highly strung is kept in ever-present readiness to envelop the continuous circulation of the life sap, i.e. of the vegetative principle, of the vital currents and of the inner life movement. The muscular substance seems to melt away while it is being sustained and transmuted. It supplies cover and conducts and yields reverberations. It is wrapt all round the bones that are not visible, so that all joints appear as passages of a ceaseless and consistent movement. The transubstantiation of the body is made visible by the transformation of the plastic means." (*Ibid.* p. 59). While the artist in Greece generally thought that the expression of a figure depends upon the faithful representation of the anatomical details of muscles and bones, the artist in India had an entirely different outlook. He thought that mere anatomical perfection is unable to give expression to the vibrant inner life of the soul in its varied manifestations, which represent in the calm, peaceful posture the possibility of infinite energy, infinite patience through infinite suffering and infinite determination to conquer all obstacles. The body of Buddha before enlightenment and after enlightenment was anatomically alike, yet his appearance after the enlightenment was superbly different from the earlier stage. The mere anatomical perfection of a person in a particular posture is unable to express his inner life. In the manifestations of this

inner life the anatomical details are subordinated. When we look at the figure of Christ or of Buddha our attention is not drawn to their muscles or bones, but to the radiant and beaming beauty that flowed from the gushing fountain-head of their inner life. The Indian artist felt that he had a right to subordinate the anatomical part in the interest of the expression of the inner life. To him the superior vocation of the artist was to give expression to the inward spiritual life with only such faithfulness to the anatomical details as may lead to its proper delineation or expression.

In the physical frame of an ordinary man the volitional implications of the muscles, sinews and tendons are in a conflict and are not reconciled to one another in a determinate manner. The reason for this is to be found in the fact that in the mind of the ordinary man, the volitional tendencies, emotions and thoughts are not under the control of any such supreme law by which they may be harmonised in the interest of one ideal. Prompted by suggestions, internal and external, they gush forth from the subconscious in a more or less haphazard manner which are held under control only for a short time in consonance merely with the practical interest of the person. These volitions, emotions and thoughts are flowing forth like whirlwind or tornado and they leave their mark on the external physical expression of the individual. The muscles and nerves in the case of such a person are being diversely and often contrarily modified by the inrush of these internal phenomena. Such a man is also a plaything in the hand of the external nature. He has therefore always to adopt himself to the demands of the vagaries of brute nature. His muscles

and nerves are in a state of continual fluctuation and are, therefore, unable to get themselves reconciled in the interest of a higher demand. The physical frame of the saint or the superman or the deity is however very different from that of an ordinary man. He has of course the same bones, muscles and sinews. But the saint has controlled all his turbulent emotions and volitions impregnating them with his interest of the higher ideal. In consequence thereof, his muscles, nerves and bones are not under the conflicting influence that could modify them differently at different moments. There being only a uniform rhythmic pulsation of life-energy, vibrant with one ideal and and one interest, there is no such distortion of them as we find in the case of an ordinary man. A deity also symbolically represents a unified set of spiritual ideas and his body, therefore, should be regarded as merely a vehicle of external expression of that particular set of spiritual ideas. Consequently the anatomic necessity of the ordinary man should not apply to them. In the representation of a superman like the Buddha or feminine figure like that of the Sarasvati (muse), the discordant emotions and volitions which characterise the ordinary man are completely in balance and merge into one another. They do not, therefore, offer any obstruction to the easy flow of life and all the limbs echo the one message that runs through the soul. From another point of view the life that expresses itself through creepers and flowers has some similarity with such a kind of life. The life energy in plants and creepers is not under the provocation of conflicting impulses as we find in the case of an ordinary man. Consequently the life-impulse flows there in a curve that knows no jerk and suffers

no obstruction. In the physical frame of the saint also, the bones, muscles and nerves offer no obstruction and form the vehicle of the easy and peaceful life that glides in union with spiritual perception and realisation which has filled the saint's mind like a single-stringed instrument that plays the same tune. The anatomical features of such a supernormal person must therefore be largely different from the anatomical features of an ordinary man. Any artist, therefore, who would aim at human life in the delineation of superhuman character would inevitably miss the mark. Nature expresses itself almost always in curves. The reason for it is that the products of nature, plants, trees, creepers etc., have evolved and grown under two influences: the necessity of self-asserting lives and the necessity of objective environment, favourable and unfavourable to the self-creating impules of life. The conflict of these two naturally produces the curve. The conflict being merely of a dual nature, there is no complexity in the natural forms. So far as a man's body or an animal's body is a part of nature, it also is expressed in more or less curvy lines, but as the intellect begins to develop from the lower animal forms to man, the intellectual and emotive elements play their part and the complexity of the expression begins to increase in an ascending scale. In the case of the animals, we find that they are only capable of a few emotions e.g. fear, anger, love etc. But in the case of man, the complexity of emotions and volitions is at its highest. Consequently though the anatomical features may remain more or less constant in different men, the diversity and the nature of the complexity of each individual's emotions and volitions produce a great change in his expression.

The Indian artist thought that the supreme vocation and purpose of art is to represent the inner expression, truth and reality of the person more than his physical appearance. In consonance with this peculiar ideal of the Indian artist, we often find that even ordinary human figures are not drawn in accordance with complete anatomical faithfulness. It will be wrong to think that Indians were ignorant of human anatomy. Susruta in his work, written probably as early as 700 B.C. has given full anatomical details of the human body discovered by actual dissection. The reason, therefore, is to be sought elsewhere. Thus we often find in the paintings of Ajanta many human figures in the delineation of which also anatomical faithfulness was not adhered to. There may be representation of a king, a queen, a lady in love, her companions, a trader or a merchant. But in all such cases the artist often will concentrate upon the character as king, queen, etc. and would try to give expression to that royal majesty or the lovelorn character or the shrewd cunning and would ignore the appeal of anatomic faithfulness. The artist was interested in giving expression to the character of the king in his royal majesty. He would not, therefore, treat him as an ordinary person who would rock to and fro under the heavy surge of conflicting emotions. He would rather concentrate on giving expression to the royal grandeur and majesty, and represent the features of the person as being dominated by that one idea so that that idea might find its best expression in him. It would be irrelevant for the artist to take cognizance of him as an ordinary human being.

We thus find that the artist's creation was regarded in India as a separate creation which was not any

duplication of the creation of soul but parallel to it. In this parallel creation the artist's emotion and the artist's idea were supreme. The artist was under no necessity to copy nature, but to give expression to his own intuitions of nature throbbing and pulsating with his own emotions and ideals. This is not only true in regard to pictorial or plastic art, but also with regard to literary art. Thus it is said that in the infinite universe of literature the poet alone is the creator. He may modify the universe of nature as it appeals to his emotions and ideals. It will thus be seen that it is the mental intuition in the meditative impulse of the artist that is the most important thing in art creation. The Indian artist often ignored nature in its actuality and gave an expression of nature and man as intuited by him in his artistic experience. The artist thus created a language of his own in representing the objects of his intuition. Artistic harmony of tones and colours thus often superseded the actual relations of nature. Nature with him was an excitant. The principal contribution of nature was to suggest or rouse the artistic intuition, which, once formed, followed its own inner law regardless of the realities of the objective world.

When we examine the various images of Hindu and Buddhist art delineating not only spiritual elements or ideas, but also varied tones of music, we often fail to understand the exact significance of the symbolic expressions of these figures. It must also be said in this connection that throughout the entire history of Indian culture, religious or philosophical, little importance was given to views, conceptions or intuitions of a purely personal nature. The Hindus thought that truth was immutable and unchangeable. It cannot be

realised or grasped merely by the freaky imagination of any and every individual. In the domain of philosophy and religion all individual reasoning was subordinated to the eternal intuitions of the sages in the Upanishads. The artist had also to follow the religious intuitions of the sages in representing the various deities. No artist had the courage or the social sanction to alter the form of any deity according to his own fancy. He was required to follow and realise within himself the intuitions of the past sages who visualised in their meditation the various forms of deities with their symbolic expressions. It is here that the unbounded scope of intuition was limited by the demands of actual spiritual realities, derived from the experiences of persons who had realised them in their meditation and who alone were competent to pronounce judgment on their nature. Thus, though, on the one hand, the artist might ignore external and objective nature, yet he could not ignore the spiritual realisation of the sages. There was a further fact behind it. It was believed that all competent persons, meditating for the realisation of a particular deity, would visualise and experience that deity in the same form. Consequently it was unanimously accepted that there was a correspondence in the meditative intuition of the various sages regarding the form, colour and character of the various deities. The artist therefore could not exert himself in a free and spontaneous manner. He had always to be guided by the traditional conceptions of the images of the different gods or goddesses. With him these traditional conceptions were the limits which he was not allowed to overstep and supersede by his own fancies; for it was believed that the conceptions of the deities as realised in medi-

tation were drawn from real experience of those spiritual persons.

In those early days people were conversant with the meanings of the suggestive symbols of the representation of the different gods and goddesses, and the uniformity of the artist's creation in this respect helped to keep alive through the centuries the meaning and significance of those artistic expressions. It is unfortunate, however, that the tradition is broken and we are now often at a loss to guess the symbolic significance of these images. The break in the tradition is largely due to the fact that there must have been long lapses under various influences in which the living worship and faith in these deities had become moribund. We find here that the artist had to be in constant touch with religious persons and devotees who inspired him with their own realisations and introduced him into the paradise of these deities. It has been again and again urged in the religious scriptures that the images of deities should be made in exact consonance with the meditative forms in which they were realised and in accordance with the verbal description of them as found in the prescriptions of meditation of these deities. But in spite of this, it cannot be gainsaid that the individual genius of the brilliant artists left its indelible mark upon their productions as manifested in their rhythmic grace and super-excellent beauty. It must also be remembered in this connection that with the change of ideas and the development of new aspects of thought and new perspectives the canons of artistic production also underwent change. If we review the artistic productions of the different ages in the different parts of India, we not only find a great diversity in the talents of the

different artists, but we also notice changes in the mental outlook and ideas among the artists of different periods in different parts of India. Thus though the artists more often followed the tendency of externalising and translating the image that was apprehended internally, yet from time to time even in the Gupta period we find many instances in which the artists sought to represent nature as faithfully as they could. In our literature we find many references to the painting of portraits which were so lifelike that they could produce the illusion of reality to the observers. But it may be said that as a general rule the aim of the artist consisted in giving an expression to the personality and character of the internally intuited image rather than a faithful representation of the anatomical details. The creation of the images of gods and goddesses forms a very large part of the artistic production of India. Though the nature and character of these gods and goddesses were already indicated in the spiritual records, yet no artist could successfully represent externally, either in pictorial or plastic art, the ideal represented in scriptural record unless he himself entered into a meditative state in which he could realise visually by his inner eye the truth, the reality and the character of each deity. Thus, in spite of the fact that in many cases the artist was found to follow the traditional descriptions of the images, he could seldom hope to do justice to his creative function as an artist unless for the moment he could get into the spirit of the images that he was going to represent.

The scriptural records of the Silpasastra and other religious documents enunciated the nature and character of a deity. On the one hand, the devotee follow-

ed these indications and tried to intuit the nature and realise the truth and significance of the particular gods and goddesses; on the other hand, the artist also tried to visualise them intuitively from within as an integral part of his life-stream endowed with all the passions and joy that he could be capable of. The artist in giving expression to such a conception tried to express fully with the help of suggestive symbols the central character of the deity and the idea or ideas for which it stood. Still in doing this the good artist was not satisfied only in representing the gods and goddesses in their true character, but he also endowed his productions or creations with the inner joy, passion and life of his inner soul. Thus the creation of the artist, on the one hand, expressed the ideally conceived and mentally intuitive significance of the deity and, on the other hand, his creations were a part of his own personality as manifested in thoughts, volitions and emotions. For this reason each individual artist, in spite of the uniformity of his subject, could leave behind him in his creations the indelible mark of his own personality and genius.

Whenever foreign influence worked its way through, or whenever the Indian artist worked under foreign influence, he paid a greater attention to faithfulness to nature. Thus in the Greco-Buddhist or the Gandhara arts the productions are inspired by a feeling of loyalty to actual human figures. In the remnants of the old art also, now available in Mohenjo-daro, we lack the true Indian ring, namely the emphasis on the idealised conception of the object of representation. The formal side of art is determined by the assemblage of lines or faithful drawing. But the idealised side found its proper expression which, on the one hand,

implied the plastic character and, on the other, involved grace and the inner composition of the figure or figures. This spirit of idealisation was found not only in the case of representation of human figures but also in the representation of animals, birds, trees and creepers. The elements of Grecian life often superseded the considerations of linear faithfulness in most of the productions of Indian art excepting probably the portions whcre faithfulness to the original was highly emphasised. In the "Chitrasutra" we hear of decorative paintings of human figures as well as the figures of birds and animals and the plants and creepers. Thus we find that Indian artist as a rule followed the impulse of representing his internal intuitions through plastic materials, colours and light.

Lecture II

SYMBOLISM AND IDEALISM

It has been said in the previous lecture that the Indian artist, in all his art-creations, sought to give an expression to the inner character and significance of the object of his creation as well as the inner pulsation of joy and life which overflowed his mind in such a manner, that, at the moment of creation, his mind was more or less one with the object of his creation. In the artist's intuitive vision, vibrant with emotion, the object of representation often appeared in its reality and even the limitations of time and space were often forgotten. The urge of artistic creation came from this unity of the subjective and the objective, and temporal and spatial considerations could not offer any limit or obstruction to the spontaneity of creation. Just as in a dewdrop, the whole of the world around it may be reflected in variegated colours, so in the heart of the artist the object of his representation may appear reflected in a moment and be tinged by the colour of his emotions in which all considerations of before and after, here and there, may be lost. In a moment of intuitive meditation, he made an artistic discovery; a revelation dawned upon him which he sought to externalise in plastic forms or pictorial ways. The necessity that binds the objective world, the so-called laws of nature, which is unalterable in the course of all natural events, often fail to bind the artist's creation which contains within it the laws of another universe soaring above the physical world. When Valmiki described the heroism of the monkey chief, Hanuman, he made him carry the hill Gandhamadana and jump over the ocean. But we are not

surprised at it. The way in which Valmiki was preparing our mind made it possible for him to represent the ten-faced and twenty-handed demon of tyranny, Ravana, and the feats of the super-heroic Hanuman, and did not in the least interfere with our enjoyment of the Ramayana by suggestions of the impossibility of the description. Just as when we read a work of Yoga we are prepared to believe the possibility of the Yogins living in a state of samadhi for months together under the ground without air and without food, so the poet also has the privilege of creating his own characters in his own way without being fettered in the least by the laws of nature. Mammata, the great rhetorical thinker, observed this special feature of artistic creation and, in the very beginning of his work, described the creation of the poet as being unfettered by the laws with which nature had fettered herself (prakrtikrita-niyama-rahitam). This tendency and peculiarity of poetical creation is also found in the work of an artist. Thus in the plastic representation of Mayadevi, the mother of the Buddha at the time when the Buddha was being born, we find a big elephant entering into her womb. Though in the representation the size of the elephant was equal to the size of Mayadevi herself, the artist was not in the least disturbed by the fact that an elephant of the size of Mayadevi could not very well enter into her womb, and that it was physically impossible that a body occupying a larger area could be contained within a space which was much smaller. We need not think that the impossibility did not strike the artist, for it was too obvious. But the artist simply ignored the claims of the laws of nature to limit the scope of the artistic activity.

Again, when a group of composite figures were

drawn in association with the plants and creepers of nature, the separate figures indicated nothing in themselves. The artist was careful that he might not represent those figures in such a manner that by their appearance they might disturb the total effect that was intended to be produced. The aim of the artist was fixed not on the parts, but on the whole. The parts, therefore, were subordinated to the interest of the total content. In the total content, again, there may be one idea, one emotion that was the soul of the total representation. This idea may be the idea of peace in the face of the Buddha or the idea of the harmony and friendship between the human spirit and the spirit of the world outside, that manifested itself through animals, birds, trees and creepers.

That the expression of this central fact was regarded as the most important achievement in the artist's mind, is apparent from the various symbolic ways in which concrete facts were represented in art. Thus the descent of Buddha on earth is often delineated by representing a staircase with the stamp of foot-prints or mere lotuses on it. It was regarded unnecessary to represent the descending figure of the Buddha. Again, the law of enlightenment and the monastic order, in which he descended from on high, is represented by three staircases with lotuses on them, a Bodhi tree and the seat of the Buddha with men and gods in a posture of adoration and devotion standing or sitting around. The appearance of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha were regarded as being of such spiritual significance that the artist thought that the delineation of the physical and visible form of Buddha would unnecessarily attract our attention from the central spiritual event. The revelation of the Buddha and the princi-

ples of enlightenment announced by him as well as the idea of the monastic order were all spiritual events which had nothing to do with the visible physical frame of the master. The artist felt that he was in the society of such men whose minds were steeped in the spiritual significance of the Buddha and his message. The Buddha, the artist wanted to suggest, was not the Buddha of flesh and blood, but his spirit which was in a sense identical with his message and the idea of the monastic order. Thus though the orthodox Theravadins adhered to the realistic view, the Mahasanghikas idealised the master. The idealising process led to the identifying of the actual Buddha in the essence of his personality with all the Buddhas of the past and thus to the neglecting of his historical personality. It was thought that all the Buddhas were beyond worldly fetters and transcendent. The physical body (rupakaya) of a Tathagata had no limit and no space. The infinity of the physical body of the Buddha was conceived by identifying his personality with the cosmic process that culminated in the absolute enlightenment. The Buddha does not live an ordinary life. He does not sleep or dream. He is all the time in a state of complete union with all truths in deep contemplation. The result of this idealising process led to the conceiving of the Buddha's person as the universal Buddhahood, unfettered by considerations of time and circumstances. This naturally led to the conception of the illusion of the corporeal life of the Buddha or the Bodhisattva. Again according to the followers of the Prajna school as represented by Subhuti, every thing was regarded as illusory and unreal, except the pure illumination. According to it, the innermost qualities of Buddhahood

can be sought nowhere else but in the depth of Prajna or supreme illumination. The natural consequence of this thought is to treat the earthly life of the Buddha Sakyamuni as being devoid of any reality. The only reality that he possesses is the illumination which is bodiless. Common men see in the Buddha one who has attained the truth by a gradual process of self-exertion. But just as every phenomenon leaves no trace either whence it comes or whither it goes, so the Tathagata in reality comes from nowhere and goes nowhere. In this respect he is like space and his person has essentially nothing other than the quality of vacuity of all things. Thus in the "Vajracchedika" it is said,

> "They who saw me by form and they who heard me by sound,
> They engaged in false endeavours, will not see me.
> A Buddha is to be seen from the law, for the lords have the body of law (Dharmakaya)
> And the nature of the law cannot be understood nor can it be made to be understood."

Nagarjuna distinguishes the phenomenal life of the Buddha from the real substance of Buddha (Dharmakaya) which is infinite. Recognising the historicity of the Buddha he emphasises the spiritual fact of which the personality of the Buddha is but a symbol. Asvaghosha again says that men see in the historic body of the Buddha a conglomeration of gross matter, but in itself it is nothing different from mind. The physical reality is the mere shadow or reflection. Thus we see that the whole philosophy of docetic Buddhism which regarded the Buddha as spiritual enlightenment, timeless and immaterial was represented in art which indicated the descent of Buddha with marks of blossom-

ing lotuses or enlightenment descending by the staircase. The representation of the Sangha and the Dharma is also done in a similar manner. These types of representation may be regarded as showing the manner in which the spiritual conception of the timeless and the spaceless enlightenment could be expressed in art. The Indian artist found a delight in representing the timeless and spaceless truths and often ignored the fetters of natural laws in their artistic creations. The artist is not controlled by any other law than that of his artistic genius. Thus Mammata in his "Kavyaprakasha", describing the nature of poetic creation, says that the poet in his creative function is not controlled by anything other than the law of his own creative activity (an-anya-para-tantram).

We may take another instance from Hindu sculpture or Hindu painting. Let us take one of the commonest subjects of Hindu artistic representation. Vishnu, the lord of the universe, is represented as lying in the ocean on the body of a serpent, unusually long and with thousand heads. From the navel of Vishnu, there rises a stalk flowering in a lotus in which the four-faced Brahma, who is the creator of the world is sitting. At the feet of Vishnu, Lakshmi, his consort, is sitting in a peaceful attitude. Lord Vishnu is represented as sleeping. The serpent is called 'Sesha' in Sanskrit which means the ultimate end or object for which other things exist. In the painting or sculpture referred to above a serpent indicates or stands for the infinitude which may break up in thousands of parts. Lord Vishnu is supposed to lie still and motionless on it. The serpent itself relates the fact that God is the whole and the end of the universe. With its thousand heads we have the suggestion that the world of infinitude has

expressed itself in the multifold ways of the finite. The fact that the whole holds within itself all its parts is signified by the pair of male and female, the Vishnu and Lakshmi—with which is also associated the idea of creation. It is through the spontaneous creative activity that the infinite manifests itself as the finite, as an eternal coming and going from and within itself. It might have been expected that Brahma, the god of creation and symbolic of the creative activity in four directions, should have sprung from the navel of Lakshmi, but this is not so. In accordance with the Sankhya Philosophy which inspired many forms of Hindu religion and art there are two principal categories, the Prakriti and the Purusha. Prakriti is often represented as feminine. She is continually creative and evolves out of herself the universe. She is the principle of matter and all that we call mental and physical are derived from her creative energy and creative substance. All minds are modifications or the products of extremely subtle material entities of the Prakriti. Purusha is pure consciousness and absolutely changeless. All changes belong to the Prakriti. Yet it is for the purpose of serving the Purusha that the equilibrium of the Prakriti is disturbed and she sets herself to work and with her creative activity produces the world. The Purusha represents the teleology, the goal, the Sesha of the Prakriti. If it was not for the Purusha all the creative energy of Prakriti would have been mute. It is for expressing this idea that the lotus stalk holding the Brahma, the god of creation, is represented as coming from the navel of Vishnu, while Lakshmi is represented as sitting at His feet looking forward for an opportunity to serve Him. The lotus is itself a symbol for gradual development,

evolution and creation. The name Lakshmi signifies beauty and charm which is the most characteristic feature of nature. It may also be urged in this connection that the impulse of beauty and creation which may be regarded as springing forth from within the calmness of meditation, spontaneous yet unperturbed, infinite yet manifesting in finite forms, is represented in the figure of Vishnu lying on the Sesha serpent. We thus see that philosophical theories, principles of art and beauty were also represented in art and the artist, in his representations, left such indications that though the product of the artist may be taken on its face value, yet the more discerning connoisseur may read therein the true message of the artist.

Another notable point in the production of an Indian artist is to be found in the fact that he often tried to represent the truths, convictions and beliefs that had taken their root in the mind of the people and were universally accepted as true. Though the artists often indulged in creative fancies, they often thought it their duty to give expression in art to the eternal and immutable truths which engaged the saints in their meditation and with the pulsation of which the social mind around was vibrant. There is also another fact which should be noted in this connection. In representing philosophical and spiritual notions the Indian artist never forgot the intimate association of nature and man. He knew that man was a part of nature and nature a part of man. In the Indian theory of rebirth a human being can transmigrate or can be born again as a plant and the spirit of a plant may also be again reborn as man. There is no intrinsic difference between the life that flows through the vegetable and the animal kingdom. It is for this reason that the artists

sought for symbol both in the vegetable and the animal kingdoms. Through the whole flow of life in plants, animals and men the Indians perceived the same revelation of truth, the same manifestation of one eternal reality of which the whole universe is but a reflection.

A question here naturally arises. If the creation of the artist is limited to his own universe, is such a universe essentially devoid of relation with the universe of nature? Did the Indian artist think that his creation was in no sense an imitation of nature? When we refer to the "Chitrasutra" we find that dancing and painting were both regarded as imitation of nature. Now in what sense can dance be regarded as imitation of nature ? In our works on dancing every possible posture of a dancer has been analysed and described both in their static and their dynamic forms melting away into other postures in the course of the process of dancing. Now none of these postures can be regarded as an imitation of any thing in nature. Speaking of the origin of dancing the "Chitrasutra" says, that before the new creation began after universal destruction, Lord Vishnu in his joy of creation danced over the waves of the ocean; and it is from this dance of creative joy that the process of dancing came into being. If we attend carefully to the inner significance of this statement we find that it really shows that dancing means a rhythmic movement that underlies all creation and creative impulse. It may, therefore, be said that though dancing is not an imitation of anything in nature, yet it is in truth the imitation of the fundamental reality of the universe as the rhythmic flow of the creative impulse. The joy of the dancer flows through his living self and manifests itself in

the rhythmic movement representing the creative impulse which is behind the universe of nature and which is responsible for its production. Dancing thus, in a sense, is an imitation of the underlying process of nature, its reality, its essence. The Indian artist paid more attention to the underlying reality of things, their essence, than to what appeared in visible forms before our eyes. In the pictorial representation also the same remark holds good; here also the artist paid his attention to the inner essence of his subject than to the outward adumbration.

When we refer to Sanskrit literature we find many instances of portraits being painted of kings and queens or of the beloved by the lovers. These portraits are supposed to have resembled the original so faithfully that they often produced an illusion of the real person. But seldom do we find any instance where the portrait was drawn in the presence of its original. All the references that we find confirm the belief that in most cases the portraits were drawn from the mind. The artist has the original impressed on his mind and it is the materials of his mind that he visualises and tries to give an external form to. Thus we find that Dushyanta draws the picture of his beloved Shakuntala when she is separated from him, and the Yaksha of the "Meghaduta" also draws a portrait of his separated wife. But in all these cases the portrait was drawn from the mind. The lover by his continual brooding had almost a trance-vision of his beloved in whose thought he spent his life. His heart was full of pangs of separation. Drops of tears trickled down his eyes as he thought of his beloved and he tried to represent in art one of these emotive moments grasped in a state of semi-trance. We thus

see that the aim of the artist was not so much the imitation of the actual visual form of the original, but an imitation of the mental image of that form as grasped with emotion and brought in touch with the very life and soul of the artist. This is also in consonance with certain lines of Indian epistemological thought. Thus one of the most well-known theories of Indian epistemology holds that, our eyes being in contact with the visual objects, our mind becomes impressed with their form and the mental images or emotions become enlivened by the reflection of the pure consciousness. The universe that we have in our mind, though connected with the external world, is in every case a new creation. This creation is, in a certain sense, a copy of the external world, but it is rich with the contributions of the mind and full of emotions and suggestions which substantially change and transform their original copies that had flowed into the mind. It becomes transformed into its spiritual substance; and it is this reality that the artist wanted to represent and not to copy the external object in a detached form by way of mere imitation. Thus though we may say that the Indian artists did not try to copy the external objects as they were, yet they tried to represent faithfully the picture or the mental image that was grasped by them in their meditative vision, which alone was for them the most important thing. Thus both dancing and painting may in this sense be regarded as an imitation of reality. The Indian artist always felt that the emotive moment of a trance-image which he sought to represent was a moment snapped out of the rhythmic flow of the creative joy that formed the essence of the artistic impulse. It was for this reason that dancing was regarded as a more perfect art

than painting, and it has been suggested in the "Chitrasutra" that the pictorial artist should take his lesson from the dancing art, for in dancing we have the unrestricted rhythmic flow which represents the creative activity in its true form. The art of painting or of sculpture can only abstract a particular moment of the creative flow for its representation. It is perhaps for supplementing this abstraction that the Indian artist always associated his human creations or creations of the deities with plant life or animal life to indicate the uniformity of life that flows through nature and that throbs through spiritual apperception.

The fact that the spiritual flow in meditation or trance is the secret of all creative activity is well exemplified by many statements in the scriptures. Thus it is said in the Upanishads that the supreme lord entered into the warmth of meditation for creating the manifold world. It is the equilibrium, the oneness of meditative apperception that can create a varied world. It is not only the secret of artistic creation but also of the divine creation. It is for this reason that the artist regarded spiritual intuition and the spiritual grasp as the fundamentally determining feature of his artistic activity. Dushyanta in describing the portrait of Shakuntala said that howsoever he might try to represent in his painting his mental image of Shakuntala he failed to endow it with the grace and sweetness of his inner apperception. The inner image was associated with emotions, longings and suggestions which could only be partially represented by the mingling of lines in the portrait. Thus the imitation of the mental image always fell short of the real intuitive image which alone was the real artistic creation. In translating this inner intuition the artist, therefore,

laid more emphasis on the delineation of the spiritual essence, the idealised intuitive vision, the mental creation, than to copy the physical features exactly as they were.

We have said above that though portrait painting was in vogue in ancient India and though often excellent portraits were made, the Indian artist seldom used any living model. The chief aim of the Indian artist was to represent the most essential characteristics of the inner spiritual manifestation of the object he wished to represent in art. When we wish to represent the human figure, the main difficulty is not the exact copying of the parts of the body but the central expression of the mind. From moment to moment new thoughts and feelings run through our mind and the wave of their occurrence produces corresponding changes on the features of our face. Our facial expressions therefore are continually undergoing changes. When the ordinary artist holds before him a living person and tries to make a plastic figure or to represent him pictorially he can only try to copy the expression of the individual at that particular moment. This, however, may produce an external physical likeness of the individual, but it does not picture the dominant expression that runs in and through the momentary changes and which may be regarded as the inner essence of the person. The true artist would by his intuition, ignore the passing phases of the person and would catch the vital expression and essence of the individual and try to represent it in art.

In the 18th and the 19th centuries the problem of realism and idealism in art was raised by Zola, Courbet, Corot and others. But it seems that the meaning and significance of realism were largely confused. The

idea of realism was that painting should represent the object just as it is, but should contain no further suggestion beyond it. But if a human figure is represented, the delineation of physical likeness would not be to paint the person as he is; for, his mental and spiritual expressions cannot be ignored and these have to be expressed by suggestion of the facial expression and the expression of the person as a whole.

It is said that in his youth Corot was asked to paint a godown building by his master. The building was painted just as it was with all its dirty iron railings and unseemly corners, but Corot arranged such a play of light and shade in it that the whole building was illuminated, as it were, with wonderful beauty. Roger Fry in discussing this portrait says: "He did the portrait so as to give complete satisfaction to the owner leaving out no detail of all the dull square windows. He gave fully every architectural commonplace, he did the iron railings of the entrance full justice but without interfering with his patron's satisfaction. In all this he found an entirely unexpected and exquisite harmony of colour between the sun-lit surface of the ugly building and the luminous sky behind. He disposed the cast shadow in the foreground and chose the proportion of everything relatively to his canvas so adroitly that he created a moving spiritual reality out of an incredibly boring suburban scene" ("Transformations"—p. 37).

Again, if we take Rembrandt's celebrated portrait we find there the portrait of a young boy with papers and book on the desk before him, holding the pen in his right hand, with the thumb pressed against the chin and looking vacantly before him. In and through the portrait the spirit of a young boy oppressed by the bur-

den of studies has come out in lively form. From one point of view if we take into consideration the display of light and shade our mind awakens in the meditative intuition of Rembrandt in which the essential truth and characteristic of the idealised form of such a boy has been held in an emotional grasp. The actual portrait falls far behind the spiritual suggestion that is lit up with the intuitional emotion and the personality of Rembrandt, yet there is nothing transcendent in it. Speaking of the desk of the boy, Roger Fry says: "This is a plain flat board of wood but one that has been scratched, battered and rubbed by school boy's rough usage. Realism, in a sense, would go no further than this, but it is handled with such a vivid sense of its density and resistance, it is situated so absolutely in the picture's space and plays so emphatically its part in the whole plastic scheme, it reveals so intimately the mysterious play of light upon matter that it becomes the vehicle of a strangely exalted spiritual state, the medium through which we share Rembrandt's deep contemplative mood. It is miraculous that matter can take exactly the impress of spirit as this pigment does. And that being so, the fact that it is extraordinarily like a school boy's desk falls into utter insignificance beside what it is in and for itself. Perhaps it is not a mere accident, but it is a fortunate and symbolic accident that this particular piece of matter could be paid for today not at the price of the original wood but at many times the value of so much gold." (*Ibid.* p. 40-41.)

So we find that there are few such realistic pictures where the mind is arrested merely in the object of representation. The mind passes away from the actual to some thing else which bears

with it a fragrance of the artist's mind, his contemplation and intuition. As a matter of fact unless and until this element of contemplation, this element of the artist's joy and his inner vision expressed itself in the inner picture, it can hardly be called a work of art. Even if we take the aforesaid picture of the building by Corot we find that our attention is drawn as much to the actual building as to the spiritual apperception of it by the artist. The portrait has been so drawn that the suggestions of plastic forms and the play of colours make our mind leave the objective reality of the building and takes delight to find its rest in the spiritual contemplation of it as conceived by the artist's mind. We seem to float about in the imaginative fancy of the artist and forget the actual object of which the portrait is supposed to be in imitation. We never for a moment discuss in our mind whether the portrait is a correct representation of the actual building. We seem to merge ourselves in the artist's mind, in the joy which created it. We are thus forced to admit that even in the so-called realistic picture the so-called artist transcends it in such a degree that the emphasis on realism is soon surpassed, and we are brought into close contact with the inner apperception of the artist with which we seem to surcharge ourselves in such a manner that the question of objective reality and objective faithfulness becomes unimportant.

Richards, in his "Principles of Literary Criticism" says that there is no special state of the mind which can be designated as the 'aesthetic state'. The state of mind varies from moment to moment under various circumstances as when we wash our face or dress. When we draw a picture or appreciate it, we have a paticular state of mind, but this state of mind has

nothing unique about it. It is only different from other states of mind. Thus, he says, "A narrower sense of aesthetic is also found in which it is confined to experiences of beauty and does imply value. And with regard to this, while admitting that such experiences can be distinguished, I shall be at pains to show that they are closely similar to many other experiences, that they differ chiefly in the connections between their constituents, and that they are only further development, a finer organisation of ordinary experiences, and not in the least a new and different kind of thing. When we look at a picture or read a poem or listen to music, we are not doing something quite unlike what we were doing on our way to the gallery or when we dressed in the morning. The fashion in which experience is caused in us is different, and as a rule the experience is more complex and, if we are successful, more unified. But our activity is not of a fundamentally different kind" (p. 16).

We shall not here discuss whether there is any transcendental image in that aesthetic state. But we wish to stress the fact that the objective visual sense-data or sense-images do not by themselves constitute aesthetic perception. The sense-images must be so absorbed in the mind and so sprinkled with the streams of various emotions, tendencies, subconscious desires, longings and the like as to produce a special state of mind. This state of mind can only be experienced either when we are creating a thing of beauty or when we are appreciating a beautiful object of art. This inner contribution is the essence of all aesthetic activity and aesthetic apperception. It is here that our aesthetic state transcends an ordinary mental state which is raised by sense objects in our practical com-

merce with the objective world. Roger Fry makes a very pertinent remark which deserves our attention in this connection. "In all cases our reaction to works of art is a reaction to a relation and not to sensations or objects or persons or events .... our emotional reactions are not about sensations ...... It is true that in nearly all works of art, agreeable sensations form the very texture of the work. In music, pleasurable quality of sound is the object of deliberate research, but it is by no means evident that this is essential. Some effects of modern music suggest that relations of mere noises, not in themselves agreeable, can arouse aesthetic pleasure, and many great composers have worked in sound textures which were generally proclaimed as harsh and disagreeable. If it be said that though disagreeable to the audience they had been found agreeable by the composer, we are none the less faced with the fact that his contemporaries did after all accept his work for its aesthetic quality even while the sound texture appeared unpleasing, although under stress of that aesthetic satisfaction, the unpleasure gradually changed to pleasure" (Op. cit. 3-4).

From the above remarks of Roger Fry we find that he admits the special existence of an aesthetic state which is not necessarily identical or invariably associated with pleasure, but which may later on produce pleasure. Though most Indian writers on literary criticism regarded pleasure as invariably determining literary art, yet Jagannatha, a writer of the 16th or the 17th century, breaks the tradition in admitting the existence of a particular mental state, the aesthetic state or the state of the beautiful, which is not identical with pleasure nor in itself necessarily pleasurable. He thinks that the production of such a mental

state is the invariable accompaniment of literary art. The effect of this aesthetic state has been designated by him in the Indian term Chamatkara which transcends the composite mental state which induced the aesthetic attitude. The various stages may thus be described: (i) the objective data, (ii) the sensory and the mental image, (iii) their commingling together in a particular form, (iv) their mental responses of the pre-existing, sub-conscious or the conscious mental data and (v) the emergent creation of the aesthetic state with its emergent feel or intuition designated by the term Chamatkara of Jagannatha. This Chamatkara or aesthetic feel may produce an exhilaration which we call the artistic joy.

It is this special aesthetic state which emerges from the composite of ordinary mental state as induced by works of art or nature, that must be regarded as the basis of the beautiful. The analysis of the pre-existing basic mental states does not in any way reveal to us the nature of the aesthetic state. The aesthetic state is dependent upon them, but is in itself a wholly new state which no fruitful analysis of its causes and conditions can manifest to us. It does not matter whether there has been a harmony of dots or a harmonious display of mingling colours or the combination of them all, or whether the material is the notes of music or the words of literature. But the most important thing is, whether such objective data had been successful in inducing an artistic state. Thus Roger Fry says: "Provided that surprising, vivid and consistent suggestions of a peculiar psychological entity are given to us we need not clamour for significant plasticity. One can imagine a case where a few disjointed dots and dashes suggesting the glance of an eye or the curve

of a mouth would produce an effect without even the suggestion of a plastic volume. And even if, as is more usual, plasticity is given it will be used generally to support or underline the psychological impressions" ("Transformations", p. 11). Merely the fact that in a particular picture plastic and spatial characters have been properly expressed, without at the same time producing the peculiar aesthetic state would not make it an excellent portrait. Roger Fry has explained this fact by comparison of a number of paintings. In his analysis of Daumier's 'Gare St. Lazare' he says, "So all the time we have been entirely forgetting plastic and spatial values. We have through vision plunged into that spaceless moral world which belongs characteristically to the novel and we can hardly help noting, by the way, how distinct this state of mind is from that with which we began." The manner in which Daumiere has expressed the plastic and spatial characters by light and shade has nothing in common with the aesthetic state that was induced by it. Yet the beauty of the picture is due to the fact that such a mental state was induced, though deficiencies in the execution of the work had in some way hampered and obstructed full realisation of the aesthetic state and the joy consequent upon it. When there is a full co-operation between inner and the outer elements for the production of a perfect aesthetic state as in Rembrandt's "Boy at lessons" the aesthetic state is complete. But even when perfect co-operation is lacking, if an artist can impress upon any kind of brute matter the configuration of his spirit, and manifest the essence of his contemplating intuition upon it, his production becomes truly artistic.

LECTURE III

TECHNIQUE AND METHODS OF INDIAN ART

We have said in the first lecture that ordinarily the artists try to snap a particular moment from the continuous flow which forms the history of an individual or groups of individuals and try to portray the same in objective manner. This portrayal falsifies the concrete reality of history. Let us take for example the well known portrait of Rembrandt—"Christ before the Pilate". We find there the judge sitting upon his high position of honour, and before him the Jewish priests are making all kinds of angry complaints against Jesus. In front of Jesus, on a high pillar, there is the big statue of Caesar; at some distance from it, in a dark corner, Jesus is standing in an extremely humiliated condition surrounded by Roman soldiers. Rembrandt passed before his mind the array of episodes relating to the life of Jesus; and having so reviewed them all, he chose for his portrayal, the superb moment when at the end of his strivings in the cause of religion, which Jesus regarded to be true, he was discarded by his own people and brought in a humiliated state before the Roman Judge. The choice of this particular moment, though revealing the great artistic insight of Rembrandt, fails to put Jesus in the proper perspective as revealed in a saintly personality taken as a whole. The Indian artists, however, particularly when they represented the character of the Buddha or the Bodhisattva, of the gods and goddesses, did not lay emphasis on any passing feeling of delight, anger, hatred or the like, but they tried to discover the true personality as the object of creation. This personality was perceived by them as dominating over

individual moments of varying emotions and could be regarded as characterising the soul or essence of the artist's object of creation. This personality was not a passing phase and could not, therefore, have been visually perceived, but it was constructed by the artist's mind and intuited in contemplation. It was this intuition that the artist was delighted to give expression to. As such portrayals or representations do not depict any actually perceived mental state as affecting the expression, these cannot be called realistic in the ordinary sense. But from another sense it is more real than the ordinarily realistic representation, for here the attention of the artist is concentrated on the abiding inner personality which forms the basis of the varying passing emotions. When the Indian artists composed a group of figures with a central figure to which our chief attention was drawn, they never underlined the importance of the individuality of the subordinate figures. The subordinate figures had no importance by themselves; they were portrayed and carved only in the interest of the central figure to which they supplied a setting. The unimportant figures round the central figure all helped by their mutual contribution to the fundamental expression of the central figure. Quite contrary is the purpose of the 'Jesus before the Pilate' of Rembrandt. There the soldiers, statue of Caesar, the Pilate himself, complaining Jews, have all been given a separate individuality and character. It appears that they are all playing parts in the drama and by the co-operative activity of the different actors the peculiarly important moments of Jesus' life have been expressed. The whole picture is objective, a scene from Jesus' life. Here the artist has not tried to give us an idea of what he

thought of it. He has not given us a shadow of his own mind which overshadows and transcends the figures drawn by him. If we take for review the composition of an Indian carving, consisting of many figures, we find that in that assemblage only one figure stands out in bold relief, while other figures dedicate their existence to the expression of the central one. In literary art also we find the Indian critics speaking of the various emotions contributing towards the development and expression of one dominant emotion. The different emotions in a literary portrayal were like the different figures in a composition always leading to the heightening of the fundamental emotion or fuller expression of the central figure for which alone the others existed. This should be noted as one of the main points of distinction between the art of India and that of Europe.

Let us take for example the carvings on the gates of Sanchi. In the carvings of the elephant and the deer park we find much natural likeness with actual animals. Perhaps they show us the remnants of the oldest artistic tendency which sought to copy nature as far as possible. But in the carvings of Sanchi we find in one place a Yakshini leaning by a tree with her flowering youth. The Yakshini has been so depicted there as if she is a part of the tree itself*. There is a natural suggestion of the similarity between the flowering life of the tree and the flowering youth of the woman. In this portrayal, likeness with nature has been well manifested. We read also in the "Chitrasutra" and in the 46th chapter of the 'Shilparatna'

* Rene Grouset's 'The Civilization of the East' (English translation by Catherine Alison Phillips) p. 22, 23—figures 13 and 14 taken from the "Archaeological Survey of India" and "Archives of the Musee Guimet".

that the artist should pay special attention to faithfulness to nature. A portrait is thus defined as an art of imitating the exact likeness of the inanimate and the immovable objects of nature as well as the animals. It has been further laid down that this likeness is not limited merely to a general likeness, but it should mean exact likeness of all the limbs or parts of the tree, creeper, mountains or the animals. It will be relevant here to allude to the Vedantic theory of perception. We find there that, howsoever idealistic the metaphysics of the Vedanta may be, it started with gross realism. In our perception our mind as associated with senses is in contact with external objects. It is transformed in the first instance in the form of the object. The philosopher thus starts with objective realism. Probably for some reason the demand was made of the artist that he must portray in his picture things as we see them with our eyes. When merely the head of a person was portrayed we may, from that, form a notion of his other limbs. But such a conception would be a matter of inference and not of portrayal. It was therefore demanded of the artist that he should draw an exact likeness of all the limbs of the portrayed object and should leave nothing for inference. (Sarvanga-drisyakaranam Chitram ity abhidhiyate). It was perhaps for this reason that though the ancient Indian artists had a knowledge of aerial and other perspectives, they could not or did not use that technique for the demonstration of distance and spatial configuration. They would not often portray or carve on different blocks or canvas the object as it appeared at different distances. From the paintings of Ajanta and various descriptions of paintings, as well as from the "Chitrasutra", it can be proved that ancient

Indians recognised the value or the significance of the perspective. It is said in the "Chitrasutra" that a man who does not know how to show the difference between a sleeping and a dead man or who cannot portray the visual gradations of a highland and a low land is no artist at all. The above saying shows that the Indians had a sound knowledge of the spatial perspective.

It is further said that each of the figures should be portrayed in exactly the same manner in relation to which they stand to one another, i.e. if some one is standing sidewise or crosswise he should be portrayed in the same manner. They should not be portrayed as if they were all looking at the artist. It is obvious that such a necessity could not have been imposed upon the artist who had no notion of perspectives. The materials used by the artist were gold, silver, copper, iron, stone, wood or merely colours. There were also artists who could portray likenesses in windlike speed (vayu-gatya). There were also artists who portrayed figures merely by lines. I have already said that the ratio of the different limbs to the head was well-known to the Indian artists, as it is in Leonardo da Vinci's "Treatise on Painting"; the head was regarded as the standard in relation to which and in ratio to which the other limbs had to be drawn. Different kinds of measurements were used for different kinds of men and women. The "Chitrasutra" describes three typical forms of hair and five typical forms of eyes, resembling fish, lotus, leaf etc. The different types of eyes signified different types of characters. The "Chitrasutra" describes nine kinds of posture, and it held that the ratio of the head with the other limbs of the body differed in accordance with the difference

in postures. Leonardo da Vinci speaking on this point in his "Treatise on Painting" makes the following remark :—

"It is very necessary that painters should have a knowledge of the bones which support the flesh by which they are covered, but particularly of joints which increase and diminish the length of them in their appearance, as in the case of an arm which does not measure the same when bent as when extended; its difference between the greatest extension and bending is about one eighth of its length .... The wrist or joint between the hand and the arm lessens on closing the hand and grows larger when it opens. The contrary happens in the arm's space between the elbow and the hand and all sides ...... When a figure is to appear nimble and delicate its muscles must never be too much marked nor are any of them to be much swelled. Because such figures are expressive of activity and swiftness and never loaded with much flesh upon the bones." (pp. 14-18).

In the language of "Chitrasutra" the lengthening or the shrinking of limbs is called Kshaya-vriddhi. In describing the various kinds of postures the 'Chitrasutra' advises the display of various kinds of light and shade in and through which the exact position of the postures could be expressed. It has been said before that according to diversity in posture there is a diversity of relation of the different parts of the body which disturbs the normal relation that the head bears to the different limbs. Twelve such postures are described in the "Chitrasutra". The same disturbance takes place at the time of motion. The "Chitrasutra" speaks of twelve kinds of motion. It then ends the discussion after suggesting that these classifications of

postures and motion have been given by way of illustration. The artist, however, should himself study the variations of muscles and limbs in different postures and in different kinds of motion which cannot be enumerated in any treatise on art, and use only intelligence and powers of observation to draw correctly and faithfully the proportionate variation of limbs in different postures and different motions. The painters of India used as main colours, white, black, blue, yellow and red by an admixture of which hundreds of colours were made. The "Chitrasutra" classifies four types of colours: (1) those which are faithful representations of nature, (2) those which observed the true proportion but largely exaggerated the size, (3) those which were particularly expressive of the plastic qualities and perspectives, and (4) those which are an admixture of the three. Special emphasis has been laid in the "Chitrasutra" on the importance of posture, proportion, the apparent plastic qualities of a painting as observed from the observer's position, grace and the differentiation of the parts of the body and likeness. The special attention of the artist is also drawn to the necessity of making a faithful representation of the features of the people of different countries, their dress and deportment. Special directions are given regarding landscape painting and the painting of roads, villages, palaces, buildings and the like. It has also been said that the artist should not merely follow the stereotyped directions of treatises on art or merely the traditional ways, but he should himself carefully observe objects of nature and men under different conditions of emotion etc., in different postures and in different states of motion, use his own intelligence and portray the same, bearing in mind the fundamental principle

that his portrait should be as far as possible a true likeness. If the painted figure appeared life-like and if the internal states of emotion are fully expressed in their features and facial expressions, then only a picture can be said to have been properly executed.

It has been said before that the art of painting and sculpture was regarded as part of dancing. The art of dancing consisted in the graceful and harmonious movement of the different parts of the body. These graceful movements were called angaharas. The treatises on the art of dancing had analysed the different constituent elements of the angaharas which they called karanas. Thirty-two different kinds of angaharas and one hundred and eight different types of karanas are mentioned. The word angahara means the manner of the movements of any particular limb. Such a movement naturally implies a number of static postures of the limbs which melted together in motion to generate an angahara. The angaharas together with the karanas effected the art of dancing. In addition to these there are other movements of hands, feet, waist and the neck which are called respectively kara-recaka, pada-recaka, kati-recaka and the kantha-recaka. These consisted in the graceful movements and attitude of the hands, feet, waist and the neck. Dancing often accompanied song and music and tried graphically to illustrate the inner meaning of the songs and the music. There are other kinds of dancing called chhalika, dandika, bhanaka etc., in which expressions of inner feelings and messages were illustrated. Sometimes whole stories were illustrated by dancing and the various seasons were described by various types of rhythmic motion. The whole of the Ramayana was sometimes acted by mere

dances. Thus dancing was used not only as a beautiful demonstration of graceful movements, but as an art of representation. The chief aim of the art of dancing was to manifest the rhythmic flow of life. The art of plastic representation in stones and colours was regarded as a part of the art of dancing, because both of them had the same purpose, namely, the representation of the movement of life.

The fact is that the plastic art is a part of the art of dancing and has an important message in understanding the principles of Indian art. The Indian artist in portraying a figure did not take it in a merely static attitude, but from that static state it was abstracted as a piece from a concrete flow of motion. We have said above that the operation of dancing is a conjoint product of posture (sthana), a constituent static element of movement (karana), the movement of the various limbs (angaharas) and the gestures of the hands, feet, waist, and the neck (recaka). In the plastic and pictorial art the artist sliced off a particular position of dancing and tried to represent it. It may be remembered in this connection that according to Indian mythology, the whole universe was regarded as having emanated from the rhythmic dance of Lord Narayana on the waves of the great ocean at the beginning of creation. In the case of destruction also the whole world of matter dissolved into the rhythmic dance of the Nataraja-Shiva. The movement of dance thus represents in itself the rhythmic motion leading to creation and the opposite rhythm of dissolution. From this point of view the whole universe may be regarded in any of the static attitude as congealed or sliced off states of rhythmic motion of dance. Dance is perhaps the epitome of

the rhythmic motion of life. This rhythmic motion of life is not only a physical or an external event, but is also a spiritual movement illustrated in the wavy motions, thought and volitions of our mind which sometimes appear in a stratified form as some conscious impressions, root-tendencies, memory and the like. But however stratified and static they might appear, they give their meaning and significance only by their association with, and participation in, the rhythmic flow of our inner life and never lose their contact with our bodies and never cease to modify our external expression and attitudes. From this point of view we may extend the same principle to the animal and vegetable kingdom which were all regarded in Indian literature as being endowed not only with life but also with consciousness and the emotions of pleasure and pain. Thus there is a two-fold dance in the universe: the rhythmic flow of inner life in all living beings and plants and even in hills and dales, and the external rhythmic flow in biological life as manifested in their corporeal expressions. Each inner life was not only in harmony with its corporeal life, but the inner life of man was in harmony with the inner life of nature and the corporeal life of nature was also in harmony with the corporeal life of man. It is the business of the artist, the seer and the poet to discover this harmony and to represent it in their art and philosophy.

The pictorial and the plastic art was thus a slice from this universal rhythmic flow in man and nature. It was for this reason that we seldom find in Indian art an emphasis on the muscles and the bones as on the states of motion. They lose their importance in the melting flow of movements from which they have

been sliced off. That muscles and bones lose their emphasis of expression in states of movement may well be illustrated from a pertinent remark of Leonardo da Vinci in his "Treatise on Painting": "These members are to be suited to the body in graceful motions expressive of the meaning which the figure is intended to convey. If it had to give the idea of genteel and agreeable carriage, the members must be slender and well turned but not lean, muscles, very slightly marked, indicating in a soft manner such as must necessarily appear; the arms, particularly pliant and no member in a straight line with any other adjoining member......In regard to the positions of the head and the arms, they are infinite, and for that reason I shall not enter any detailed rules concerning them. Suffice it to say that they are to be easy and free, graceful and varied in their bendings, so that they may not appear stiff like pieces of wood." (pp. 43-44). In this connection da Vinci further notes the imperceptible motion that is produced in our bodies by an inner flow of emotions and thoughts. That the inner flow of our emotions and thoughts affects the features and expressions of our body is the basic principle of the art of dancing and of all pictorial and plastic representations. The inner dance of the mind had its counterpart in the movements in modification of our features and expressions. Speaking of this, da Vinci says, "A mere thought or operation of the mind excites only simple and easy motions of the body not this way, and that way, because its object is in the mind; it does not affect the senses when it is collected within itself." (p. 48). He further says, "There are some emotions in the mind which are not expressed by any particular motion of

the body, while in others the expressions cannot be shown without it. In the first, the arms fall down, the hands and all other parts which in general are the most active, remain at rest. But such emotions of the soul as produce bodily actions, must put the members into such motions as are appropriated to the intention of the mind. This, however, is an ample subject and we have a great deal to say upon it. There is a third kind of motion which participates the two already described". (*Ibid*).

The above passages amply illustrate the fact that the artist has to take into consideration not only physical movement but also mental and spiritual movement. In the portrayal of the formation of plastic images of the Buddha, Bodhisattva and the deities, artists have given ample proof of their skill in demonstrating the rhythmic dance of the mind and its harmony through facial features and the features of the body.

The secret of an artistic representation lies in the contemplation and the handling of plastic space and its movement. If we compare the plastic arts of different countries, we find an intrinsic difference in the plastic conception of space. Thus if we take Greek sculpture we find that the sculptors of Greece conceived the plastic space as polygonal where a number of planes met together in large obtuse angles and by a gradual melting away of the sides gave an expression of the plastic art. In the case of Chinese art we find the conception of space as elliptical, in consequence of which Chinese figures appear as portions of an oval space. But the Indian artist did not conceive space either as polygonal or as elliptical, but as internal and intuitional, a fact which is very difficult

for the Europeans to appreciate. The space representation of Indian artists is the internal and intuitional space which may be regarded as a dynamic psychological volume than as a static polygonal or elliptical plane.

When we perceive the visible form of things in and through the visible space, a particular kind of space configuration manifests itself as being associated with that form. When representations are made by lines or the melting of lights and shade or by the mingling of colours, forms of bodies are carved out of this particular space conception.

Not only in the case of visual art but also in the case of appreciation of literature and music we feel in our minds the expression of a psychological volume which, though devoid of lines, shades or colours or ordinary demarcations of space, is yet fit to have a psychological existence, a psychological form or shape which is indefinite and still real. Charles Mauron in his "The Nature and Beauty of Art" has very effectively demonstrated its existence. He says, "We should, for literature, transpose the ideas of volumes from the domain of space to the domain of spirit and conceive the literary artist as creating psychological volumes".

We start with the internal space conception as indefinite yet existent with which its commerce with the external world, through the intermediary of our corporeal body and its movements, produces perception and conception of the external space. This conception gradually induces the apperception of psychological volumes in the apprehension of the internal phenomena of the mind. This leads us to accept the existence of a mental space as opposed to the external space. It is for this reason that the

Indians always regarded the existence of a spiritual space which they called chidakasha. In the case of our perception of external objects we perceive the space outlying the space of the colour distribution as being in mutual association. Through such mutual association the space-elements became mingled and harmonised together in particular forms. These are noted in the sub-conscious mind and leave there the impressions which, later on, become the standard in relation to which the mingling together of other space-elements is reconciled and harmonised. In this feeling of the sub-conscious recognition of the harmony of the sub-conscious elements of space-groupings with the conscious elements of space-groupings, we have a feeling of joy and a perception of the beauty of the symmetry of form. The feeling of harmony which underlies all perception of beauty is due to the fact that the space-groupings in the bodies of animals, creeper, plants, etc. as well as the natural objects like hill, dales and rivers have a unity with our sub-conscious appreciation of space-groupings which have been impressed upon the sub-conscious plane from the earliest days of our infancy. Nature impresses her forms on our conscious mind which is stored in the sub-conscious and which becomes the inner standard with which all space-groupings of future perception are to be reconciled. It is this reconciliation, spontaneous and free, that generates in us a spontaneous joy devoid of any motive or object which may be designated as the joy of the apperception of beauty. These space-groupings manifest themselves in the plastic mingling of space volumes, in the melting of lines into lines as well as in the harmonious distribution of colours. They further manifest them-

selves in thousand varieties in accordance with their environmental setting and on account of the thousand minglings of light and shade. Differences as regards the appraisal of beauty arise partly owing to the difference in the subjective data of the apprehending persons, partly on account of the difference of emphasis on the plastic, lineal and colour-harmonies, the choice of environmental settings and on account of the diversity of inner expressions. But the true expression of beauty depends upon a proper balance of them all.

Among the ancient Greeks, the symmetry and harmony of the different parts and the total concrete unity of rhythm were regarded as the most important desiderata of beauty, but among the moderns, greater importance is laid on the capacity of the artistic product to give expression to the inner feelings and thought. The spirit must be expressed by the matter. In India the chief aim of the artist was to make his art expressive and significant. But the Indian artist did not wish so much to express the private, the personal and passing feelings, as to give expression to the universal and eternal elements in man in subordination to the transitory elements in him.

This universal did not always mean any spiritual content of a philosophic truth. There could be universal feelings as well. The content of universality means all-pervasiveness as a dominant existence. The philosophy of feeling that we read in Indian works of literary criticism shows that it was thought that there were some feelings or emotions which were rooted deeply in the nature of man and which could not be regarded as passing phases but as dominant characteristics. These emotions such as sex-emotions,

fear, anger, feeling of the ludicrous and the comic, pathos, heroism, hatred, wonder, peaceful sentiments, and the like, were regarded as emotional tendencies which were rooted deeply in the nature of man. These root-emotions expressed themselves through a large number of passing and transitory phases which resulted, by their joint consonance, in definite expressions which might be regarded not as effects of the transitory states induced by the aforesaid emotions, but as expressions produced by those dominant emotions in and through their own specific passing waves. The root-emotions thus can be called universal in more than one sense. First of all they exist in man as inseparable elements of his nature. Secondly, they are regarded as basic emotions which express themselves in various phases of emotions and in and through them, are led to a resultant emergent expression. These emotions could be called universal also in another sense. It was believed that an individual could be so much under the sway of any of these root-emotions that for the moment his other emotions as well as the other elements of his personality were being entirely subdued. This suppression of one's personality in the interest of any particular dominant emotion may thus also be regarded as its all-pervasiveness and universality. The Indian artist did not so much desire to represent passing and transitory expressions of emotions or to portray the insignificant aspects of a person, as he liked to idealise the individual as being under the sway of a dominant emotion or the essential features of his personality. He tried to idealise the individual in and through a particular dominant emotion and to give expression to it through a particular phase of it.

In the opinion of the Indian art-critic the communication of the joy of the artist to the observer in and through the artistic product, consisted in the capacity of the artist to fill the observer with an emotion similar to his own, an emotion in which, for the time being, the observer's personality had been so submerged that no alien element of his personality could manifest itself. The artist did not consider it to be his duty to copy the realistic expression of a man in love, in sorrow or in anger, but he conceived by his mental intuition the sentiment of love as an idealised universal feeling as well as the idealised forms of expression of such a love as revealed in intuition and he tried to portray the same. It is for this reason that the artists of India portrayed also imaginary figures to represent different kinds of music and harmony. In making such a portrayal the artist tried to give form to his inner intuition as apperceived in the psychological volumes of his inner space, suggesting its own colours and specific postures and tried to portray the same. In the case of portraying the representation of the deities or of human being also, the Indian artist started from his idealised intuition of particular emotions, thoughts and spiritual symbols, and tried to visualise them in his mind within his inner space as expressed therein and tried to represent the same in colours or in the carving of stones. He loved to imitate not so much the external nature as the inner expressions of the intuited idealised forms. He generally started from within and not from without. He tried to reveal the inner in outer forms, but not so much the outer in outer forms.

Thus the ideal of the Indian artist was to express in

terms of the carvings of the stone, the melting of the lines, the mingling of colours, the intuitive forms of the spirit. No one had ever seen a Boddhisattva or the saint who was prepared to sacrifice all for the good of all living beings. But we all know the qualities of universal charity, friendship and peace with which the idea of the Bodhisattva is associated. The artist by his inner intuition gives form to these qualities and perceives in his mental eye the form of a figure that responds to the sublimity of this character. He then tries to portray or give external expression in a material form to this internally realised image such that it may have its appeal to those who have internally conceived the possible image of a Bodhisattva. The business of the artist, therefore, was to give expression to mental world as the spiritual ideal. In the canonical works of Indian art, strict directions have been given that an artist before beginning his work should as far as possible purify his mind, perform his ablutions and try to enter into meditation so that his mind may be purged of impurities and he may make himself fit for undertaking a work of art.

One of the well-known principles of Indian philosophy is that not only the wavy flow of our feelings and emotions are echoed in the large tissues and muscles of our bodies, but that the movement of the mind is the root-cause of the biological flow of the vital force which may be identified with life. The external life movement is thus in unison with the inner movement of the mind. The mental universe and its life is thus in complete unison with the life of the physical universe. It is for this reason that the Indians regarded man as a part of nature. All the wealth of nature exists for man and is associated with,

and subordinated to him for the realisation of spiritual and moral interests. We, therefore, find that the Indian poets always sought to speak of human bodies and human problems and human ideals in terms of the objects of nature. Thus in describing a pair of eyes, the Indian poet would try to describe it in terms of its likeness with the pair of eyes of the deer, with a lotus leaf, with a Khanjana bird, with a small fish; in describing a human hand he would speak of it as resembling a creeper, the stalk of lotuses and so on. It is indeed true that the poets of western countries also had to go to the external nature for finding imageries of the human world. But most often there is a distinction between the two. Thus we take the verse

'Violet by a mossy stone, half hidden from the eye!
Fair as a star, when only one is shining in the sky.

Here the comparison is between the attractiveness of a violet beside the mossy stone or a single star in the sky and the attractive beauty of a girl. Both the violet and the star drew our attention by their uniqueness as the girl did by her beauty. But if we take an imagery of Kalidasa, we find he described that, as a moss surrounding a flower enhances its beauty, so did the beauty of Shakuntala shine forth in a greater charm through her clothes made of the birches of trees. Here the imagery is between two complete wholes and not of particular characteristic alone. If we read Kalidasa's "Ritu-samhara" or "Meghaduta" we are forced to perceive the similarity of the flow of life between the human universe and the universe of nature. It seems as if there is the same joy, the same pathos, the same anxiety in the world of nature as there is in the human world. It is for this reason

that portrayals of human figures or figures of beauties were always associated with the representation from nature. There is always the tendency to show the unity of life that runs through man and nature. Those who have seen the majestic sun-temple at Konarak must have been struck with the fact that the horses of the Sun had been carved out of the stone in such a manner as if they had been running a race. In a similar manner processions of hundreds of elephants have been depicted and the swans have been shown as if they were flying in the sky. In all the decorations, it has been suggested that the whole world of nature has been on the move. As we gaze intently on the temple which has been raised in the form of a chariot, it seems to us as if the whole chariot of stone is running forward, drawn by seven horses, and that the whole universe is in motion. Man is born in the world of nature and his life has been drawn from it, his apperception of beauty has emerged from it and his own law is in unison with the law of the world. Whatever is in nature is in man, whatever is in man is in nature; our god Siva is not only the lord of men, but he is the lord of the world of animals. Our gods ride on the animals and flowers and they offer peace not only to men, but also to all the animals of nature. For this reason plastic and pictorial art in India is not busy only with men but the whole of nature. Thus the world of nature is intimately connected with our lives. We cannot think of our lives without the life of nature and we cannot think of nature without man for whom it exists. It is for this reason that mere landscape painting is so rare in Indian art. A picture or a portrait must have a meaning, its significance for man and not merely the passive work of beauty.

Our Bodhisattvas devote their lives not for the good of man alone, but for all living beings. In our theories of karma and rebirth we believe that human beings are born as animals and plants; plants and animals are reborn as men. In the story of Buddha's birth, Buddha enters into the womb of his mother in the form of an elephant. The gods have had as their consorts certain kinds of flowers and in the worship of certain gods certain flowers and leaves are preferable to others. We worship rivers, mountains and trees. We attain virtue and merit by marrying one tree with another and even animals are often the object of our worship. Non-violence is the fundamental principle of our religion, and according to our scriptures, we commit sin if we hurt a plant. It is, therefore, no wonder that our artist should try to represent our men and our gods in perfect harmony with the world of nature. Our ideals and our strivings for their attainment are so different from those of the West that our art which is surcharged with them cannot well be understood by those who look at it from the European angle of vision. Those who are conversant with Indian philosophy, religion and culture as a whole and can look at our art as founded in the same can alone have a penetration into the meaning and significance of Indian art.

Even in the art of the Mohenjo-daro we find representation of a sage in a state of meditation, the lord Pashupati, surrounded by animals, and a representation of the mother earth. From times immemorial the eyes of India were fixed on the wealth of spiritual achievements when other nations were busy with greedy conquest. In this connection it is well worth referring to a story in Laurence Binyon's "Spirit of

man in Asian Art". The story as told by Arrian and as described by Binyon runs as follows :—

"When Alexander invaded India, the naked ascetics, numerous then as now, excited his curiosity and he questioned them through interpreters. They told him roundly that he was a nuisance to the world with his silly conquests; he had come all that way from his home only to plague himself and every one else, and all of the earth that he would really possess would be what sufficed for a grave to cover his bones. 'Alexander' says the historian Arrian, 'praised what they had said but continued to act in opposition to their advice'. He could not, however, get them out of his thoughts; he wanted to understand them. And when he came to Taxila, he conceived a great desire that one of them should live with him because he admired so much their singular patience and fortitude. The most venerable of the ascetics dismissed his invitation scornfully : if Alexander called himself the son of God he was equally the son of God ; he had all he wanted and when he died he would be delivered from the irksome companionship of the body, whereas Alexander and his men wandered about and got no good from their wanderings. Nevertheless one of the ascetics, called Kalyana, yielded; he gave up his way of life and joined the Macedonians. Alexander made him his friend. He went as far as Persia ; but gradually the alien mode of his life so distressed and encumbered his spirit that he became ill and determined to die. Alexander sought in vain to dissuade him, but at last he reluctantly gave his consent. A great pyre was built ; and with a completeness of misunderstanding, characteristic of the West, Alexander thought to mitigate for his friend the pangs

of leaving this beautiful world by ordering a procession of precious things and all kinds of incense to be thrown upon the pyre. There was a solemn procession, the whole army was paraded, trumpets were blown and elephants added to the clamour with their cries. But Kalyana, borne on a litter, paid no attention to these pomps intended in his honour; he gave away the rugs and bowls of silver and gold which were to have been consumed with him; he was happy again at last and softly sang songs and hymns to the gods in his own language as he climbed the pyre and lay down on it. As the flames rushed over him the Macedonians marvelled that he lay quite still and moved not at all. Alexander himself had withdrawn unable to endure a sight so painful." (Pp. 38-40).

LECTURE IV

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIAN ART

As in the case of the art of other countries, Indian art also developed with the growth of knowledge and culture. The view of Ferguson that Indian art began to degenerate immediately after Ashoka is not accepted by other critics. Speaking of the lions on the Ashoka pillar Sir John Marshall says: "The Sarnath capital, on the other hand, though by no means a masterpiece, is the product of the most developed art of which the world was cognizant in the 3rd century B.C."* Without long practice in sculpture it would not have been possible to produce such lions. The method of execution expresses marvellously the strength and liveliness of the lions through their expressive muscles and bones. But the sculptors were not satisfied in producing merely the lions in the natural manner; they tried to make them uniform with the pillar in which they were placed. The lions were in harmony with the complete whole and they stand out as a natural development and in natural harmony with the pillar as a whole. But many think that these lions were built with the help of the Persepolitans and for that reason much natural likeness is observed. Sometime after this, Greek ideals of art were trying to make headway on the north-west frontier. In the 2nd century at the time of the Sungas, the Bharhut sculptures were executed. In stone-carvings and specimens of sculptures, the stories of the Jatakas and the life story of the Buddha are depicted. Here we find that the artist has not paid much attention to the execution of natural

* The Monuments of Ancient India—Cambridge History of India: Vol. I, p. 620.

likeness, but has tried to give external form to ideal scenes, situations and characters.

Thus Sir John Marshall, speaking of this type of art, says: "At the same time the forms are splayed out to the verge of distortion, and the influence of mental abstraction on the part of the artist is still manifest in the treatment of the feet or of the hands in the attitude of prayer, which, irrespective of anatomical accuracy, are turned sideways and presented in their broadest aspect."† The Vesnagar column was also made in this period. In the stone carvings of Bharhut two different styles are noticeable. With regard to one set of carvings, it may be said that the artist had attempted to make the figures naturalistic or realistic. Many think that these were executed under the influence of the Greek artist by the artists of Taxila. In the stone carvings of Bodhgaya we come to the art of the next stage. It seems that here we can notice the intermingling of the Greek with the Persepolitan style. After this, towards the end of the 1st century B.C., we notice the carvings of the stone walls and the gates of Sanchi. It may be said with confidence that here we have the art of ancient India at its best. They represented the stories of the Jataka, the procession of Ashoka, the Buddhist heaven, the temple of Bodhagaya, the Bodhi tree and so on. These stone carvings were probably executed by many artists at different times. It therefore lacks the harmony that could have been discovered if they all were the work of the artists of the same period and of the same locality. In some places the artist had preferred to execute natural likeness, while in other cases he ignored it altogether. In

† Op. cit. p. 625

the representation of the Chhaddanta Jataka, the animals have been depicted as running over the lotus leaves, whereas on the other hand the elephants have been shown with a great degree of natural likeness. Though they have been drawn in the same plane, yet in the mingling of light and shade and the curves of lines the artist has been able to represent the plastic characters of the figures. In these stone carvings, by means of different types of postures and gestures and the modulation of the palms and the fingers, the artist has tried to indicate various messages. In the southern gate the representation of the battle for the possession of the relics of the Buddha has come out very successfully, and it demonstrates its lively character. A comparison of the Sanchi stone carvings with that of Bharhut stones clearly shows that the Bharhut pictures were much inferior to those of Sanchi. The plastic character of the stone carvings of Sanchi have been executed with such masterly genius that they appear to be extremely lively. In Muttra from the 2nd century B.C. statues were being made under the influence of Greek art. With the spread of Greek art, the older traditions of Indian art had come into a state of muddle. Sir John Marshall speaking of the degeneration of the Muttra art says that: "The dramatic vigour and warmth of feeling which characterised the reliefs of the Sanchi gateways is now vanishing; the composition is becoming weak and mechanical, the postures formal and stilted. The cause of this sudden decadence is not difficult to discover. A little before the beginning of the Christian era, Mathura had become the capital of a Satrapy, either subordinate to or closely connected with the Scytho-Parthian king-

‡ Op. cit. p. 633.

dom of Taxila and, as a result, there was an influx there of semi-Hellenistic art, too weak in its new environment to maintain its individuality, yet still strong enough to interrupt and enervate the older traditions of Hindustan. It was no longer a case of Indian art being vitalised by the inspiration of the West but of its being deadened by its embrace."

There was such a great difference between the ideals of Greek art and those of Indian art that the influx of the former led to a conflict which chilled and deadened, to a large extent, the original energy of the latter. In consequence thereof, the spirit of Indian art, having met with a set-back for a moment, again reasserted itself with a greater vigour and stamped out the possibility of the influence of Greek art. Comparing Greek art with Indian art Sir John Marshall says, "Hellenistic art never took a real and lasting hold upon India, for the reason that the temperaments of the two peoples were radically dissimilar. To the Greek, man, man's beauty, man's intellect were everything, and it was the apotheosis of this beauty and this intellect which still remained the keynote of Hellenistic art even in the Orient. But these ideals awakened no response in the Indian mind. The vision of the Indian was bounded by the immortal rather than the mortal, by the infinite rather than the finite. Where Greek thought was ethical, his was spiritual; where Greek was rational, his was emotional. And to these higher aspirations, these more spiritual instincts, he sought, at a later date, to give articulate expression by translating them into the terms of form and colour". *(Op. cit. p. 649)*.

But before the Guptas the Indian ideal of expressing the spiritual through the material had not attained

its final perfection. In the older epochs the spiritual ideal of Indian art had not become self-conscious; it was more or less mute and the tendencies of an objective view of art and objective motives of religion were determining the spirit of art. In consequence thereof in the artistic representation of older epochs we find a greater tendency to imitate nature and to portray religious events in an objective manner. The Indians were under the tutorship of the Greek for a short period. They were for a time over-swayed by the vigour and power of Greek art in producing natural likeness. The Indian artists tried to master the technique of Greek art in this direction and to apply it for the representation of their own religious life and religious ideals. It is here that the Greco-Bactrian and the Muttra art shows itself. Taxila was a great meeting place for the Greek and the Indians. The artists, trained in this school in Taxila, carried their principles with them and applied them to the execution of stone-carvings in other places also. But the spirit of Indian art could not easily reconcile itself to the spirit of the Greek art; and we find in one of the walls of Sanchi carvings, animals, buffaloes, lions, tigers, wolves, serpents, deer, elephants, assembling underneath the Bodhi tree. It clearly manifests this spirit of Indian art that the spiritual principle is not limited to man, but descends down to the whole animate creation; and that there is a deeper unison or unity between men and animals, not in their animal quarters alone, but also in the spiritual plane which binds man with the whole of the animate world. The likeness of animals with the animal figures, as shown in the stone-carvings of Sarnath, are excellent and superb. But though faithful to nature, the artist

of Sarnath was not oblivious of the central principle of Indian art, which is to create the inner image for representing spirituality rather than to create beauty by producing natural likeness. The love that is manifested here towards the animals has no parallel in Assyrian or Greek art. Rene Grousset in his work —"The Civilisation of the East"—says on this point :—

"As we stand before these scenes, with their delicate and tender feeling for nature, Assyrian bas-reliefs seem very conventional and even Greek bas-reliefs almost strike us as cold. In this connection we may note what it is that distinguishes the Indian animal-sculptors from those of classical art; it is precisely this brotherly sympathy with all living beings, a sentiment having its source at once in the dogma of transmigration and in that tenderness towards the whole universe which is distinctively Buddhist and Jain, or, in later days Krishnaite. Filled with the spirit of the Jatakas, the jungle became an earthly paradise". (p. 102).

Rene Grousset, in applauding the figures of Yakshinis with their full breasts and hips full of the charm of feminine beauty and attraction, says :— "Never, even in the Greece of the classic age, has the innocent and spontaneous joy of life been so happily expressed. Never has the poetry of the female form been rendered with a more sensuous power than in the statues of female genii (Yakshinis)".* The Sanchi art excels the Greco-Buddhist art by its deeper spiritual longings and suavity and spontaneity of forms in an overwhelming manner, but still this type of art had flourished in the countries adjoining India such

* Ibid. p. 102.

as Khotan, Kuch, Turphan, Tunghwang and other places.

A review of Indian history shows that in North India, with the destruction of the older kingdoms, the Guptas came into power; after the Guptas, Harsha established his greater power and after Harsha, came the Palas and the Senas. In South India the Andhras were powerful and they at one time made headway into North India. From the time of the Andhras, the Hindus were in power in the South. But even when the Gandhara art was in a state of decadence under the influence of Greek art, we find many specimens of the original types of Indian art. In these statues the Buddha is represented with a shaven head over which there is a turban. He has a very fine cloth over his body through which the whole body is clearly visible and the two eye-balls are joined with fine hair. There was no cloth on his right shoulder and he was also represented with a broad chest. It is from these types of images that the images of the Gupta age, overflowing with grace, softness and tenderness, evolved. The woman figures of the Gupta age are as sensuously and passionately expressed as similar figures on the Sanchi walls, but they are as a rule more expressive and more emotional.

Amaravati was the capital of Hindu India in the South. Indian art flourished here from 2nd century B. C. to the 3rd century A.D., and it was dominated by the Hindu ideals. The Amaravati art was intermediate between the Sanchi and the Bharhut. We can trace no foreign influence in the Amaravati art, and the natural flow of life which is the characteristic feature of Indian art finds its full expression here. In the Amaravati art there is, on the one hand, a representa-

tion of natural likeness and, on the other hand, there appears a full expression of the internal and the spiritual as dominating the natural. There, in a scene is depicted how a mad elephant was trying to attack the Buddha; while the crowd was intensely afraid of the beast, the Buddha was pacifying the whole situation by his calm self-consciousness. The ferocity of the beast comes out with all its naturalness and the fear in the faces of the crowd has been depicted in a very lively manner. The calm, spiritual self-consciousness of the Buddha has been faithfully depicted. In Sanchi we find the deep sympathy of the artist with the whole of the animate world, and we do not also miss the natural likeness in the figures. But the subject of representation is almost always the stories of the Jataka mythology. In the Amaravati art, however, we find the artist attempting to express independently his spiritual ideals and conceptions through the stone materials. Speaking of the Amaravati art Rene Grousset says :— "The purely naturalistic art of Sanchi has now become spiritualized by a higher influence, which has raised life to a higher plane and attained an idealism of the highest order." (*Ibid.* p. 137). The principles of Amaravati art were executed and continued in the Gupta period where it attained its highest perfection. The bustle and turmoil of human life that is represented in the Amaravati art quietened down to a balance of equilibrium and peace under the dominating influence of self-exerting and self-conscious spiritual experience.

The Guptas lived in the 4th century A.D., the period of great philosophical enlightenment of the Buddhists, the period when Vasubandhu, Asanga and Maitreya flourished. It was at this time also that the

philosophical sutras of the Hindus largely flourished. Under the influence of religion and philosophy, a new change had come into the country and this change left its mark on the Indian art of the period.

The artists of the Gupta period were thoroughly acquainted with the definite proportions of the body and could create efficiently a natural likeness. They were also acquainted with the habits, manners, dress and the distinctive features of the people of the different countries. But in trying to represent a natural likeness, they did not follow the geometrical canons of the Greeks. Their ideal was to create the natural flow of life that manifests itself in nature. This they did with curved leafy lines. Nowhere in nature do we meet with lines that are straight; it is through curves that the flow and spontaneity of life can be expressed. It is for this reason that the artists of the Gupta period represented human face in an oval shape and the forehead and the eye-balls were drawn in the curve of a bow, the eyes were drawn in imitation of the eyes of a gazel, or a fish, or a bird, the neck was drawn in imitation of the neck of a goose, the thighs were drawn in imitation of an elephant's trunk, the hands were made in imitation of a stalk of a lotus and the fingers like a budding champaka. In drawing feminine figures they often drew it in a bent form; the forms that are drawn by the artists were also echoed in literature. Thus the different limbs of the human body were drawn after the pattern of different beautiful things in the vegetable world, in and through which the inner unity between the world of nature and the world of man was manifested. When a feminine figure was drawn, it was bent on the right side so that the weight of her breasts fell on the left

side and the weight of her hips was supported on the sides by the feet. The male figure was drawn in an opposite manner; for this reason a human figure was drawn more in the curvilineal style than in the rectilineal. We have said elsewhere that the art of pictorial representation was inspired and drawn from the art of dancing of which it forms a part. We have also said that the pictorial art or the plastic art is but an abstraction, a slicing from the easy spontaneity that is represented in the art of dancing. In the pictorial or the plastic art the movement of life could only be shown by curvy lines drawn in imitation of similar lines in the world of nature, which was for the Indians the predominant source of life and beauty. Human beauty with them was but an echo of nature. This spirit is not only enhanced in and through the varied productions of Indian art, but it is also the principle on which the art of literature and poetry is based.

For about a thousand years from the 4th century A.D. Indians tried to follow the same principle in their pictorial and plastic representations. The figure of the Buddha of the Gupta age as preserved in the Muttra Museum, and the Buddha figure preserved in Sarnath are excellent specimens demonstrating the spirit of Indian art. When we look at the face of these two figures, they seem to beam up with the light of spiritual illumination, the limbs of the body are in due proportion and are drawn in an easy curve which at once suggests the fact that the spiritual enlightenment has flowed down through the body. Rene Grousset makes the following remarks about the two figures:—

"The limbs are pure and harmonious, the faces have a tranquil suavity, and it is inspired by an art so steeped in intellectualism as to be a direct expres-

sion of the soul through the purely ideal beauty of form. Perhaps we shall understand the character of these works better if we consider that they are contemporary with the luminous and fluid metaphysics of the great Indian idealists of the fifth century, an Asanga or a Vasubandhu." (*Ibid.* pp. 141-42).

The gestures of the figures, otherwise called mudra, play their important part in Indian religious history and also in the history of Indian art. The palm and the fingers can be modulated in an endless variety of forms. Of these those which contributed to beauty and expressiveness of their figures were used in art and religion; somehow or other religious people and artists were conversant with the various forms of these finger gestures and they were also familiar with their meaning and significance. The facial gesture and the gesture of the body were just made to synchronise with the gesture of the fingers, which came out like little flowers from the tree or creeper-like curve of the body. Each of these gestures of the finger was associated with a particular mental attitude and formed the index which made it possible for the observer to compare its language with the language of the face and the eyes and the general posture of the body. These mudras were thus important in the dancing, plastic and pictorial art.

The pictorial art in the caves of Ajanta extends, probably, from the 1st century A.D. to the 6th or 7th century A.D. It thus started from the Amaravati period of art and passed through the succeeding centuries. It preserves the different tendencies of Indian art during the first seven centuries of the Christian era. The tendencies of Greco-Buddhist art have been dominated here by the spirit of Indian art though

the Iranian influence is recognisable. These were probably painted in the 7th century at the time of the Chalukyas. There are not only Iranian figures, but the figures of the Chinese and the people of other nationalities are found depicted. Their posture, deportment, racial features and dress seem to be quite in keeping with the countries from which they hailed. The style of paintings in the caves Nos. 10, 17 and 19 is very much like that of the Sanchi art. There is the same unity of life between the animal life and human life that we notice in the Sanchi art. This unity of life between the plants and human beings may also be illustrated from the more or less Indian contemporaneous literature. Thus in the 'Vikramorvashi' of Kalidasa the nymph Urvashi transformed herself into a creeper and the creeper was again transformed into the nymph. This unity between plant life and human life is so well-illustrated in the paintings of Ajanta that even when a man and a woman are depicted as embracing and kissing each other, there is such a purity and innocence, such an absence of voluptuousness that it appears as if a creeper was entwining a tree. It is this innocence that can justify such paintings in a Buddhist monastery. Often the feminine figures are painted with all the realities of feminine attractions of youthful charm, beauty and passion, but still there is no suggestion of voluptuous indecency, and the scenes are depicted with the natural and easy flow of life where one stream mingles with another in its own spontaneity. The representation of the graceful postures of the limbs and the bodies, the gestures of the eyes, all seem to flow in that natural innocence and sweetness which reminds us more of the natural flow of life in the plant world. There is no sign, no

indication of the brutal and corrupt passion; the bacchanalian fury of passion has no place in the demonstration of the love scenes and the sexuality of the body seems to express itself in terms of spiritual longing for love. It is urged by this ideality of love, transcending its sexuality, that Kalidasa the great poet, unhesitatingly described the physical beauty of Parvati limb by limb, as echoing forth the beauty of nature in all its wealth. The beauty that flows in the youthful body of a woman, which can fill us with an innocent flowing moon-beams of a cloudless night or an ablution in a limpid cool stream in the evening of a sunny day. Rene Grousset reviewing the paintings of Ajanta joy, resembles the beauty of a star or the over-says, "the treatment of the hands alone by the painters of Ajanta would be enough to express the almost Franciscan tenderness by which they are animated; what a spiritual quality there is in their slightest gestures, what mystical feeling in the most amorous caress! Even in the idyllic scenes, body and soul alike are instinct with an emotion of piety. Thus all this naturalistic art remains passionately mystical and is constantly lifted above itself by the most fervent bhakti (piety) as well as by the loftiest idealism." (*Ibid.* p. 158).

Speaking of the Buddha and Bodhisattva, painted in cave No. 1 Rene Grousset says: "A figure worthy of a place in the art of the world by the side of the sublimest incarnations of the Sistine Chapel, or of such drawings as that of Christ for the 'Last Supper' in which Leonardo da Vinci has expressed the most intense emotions of the soul.

"To sum up these multifarious impressions in a single formula, we may say that the predominant feature

of Ajanta is an intimate and harmonious fusion of the old Indian naturalism of Sanchi with the youthful freshness and the infinite gentleness of Buddhist mysticism. And it is this which makes Ajanta a complete expression of every side of Indian soul." (*Ibid.* p. 159).

Most of the Puranas were written between the 2nd and the 11th century A.D. Therefore we find the religion of the Puranas and the scenes of Puranic life carved in stones of the 3rd century A.D. There is no doubt that the images of the gods and goddesses were made from a much earlier period. The Beshnagar column of the 2nd century B.C. shows clearly how the Bhagavata religion had spread not only among the Hindus, but also among the Greeks. The sculptures of the 10th century A.D. always dealt with the Hindu gods and goddesses. In the "Brihat-samhita" of Varaha of the 5th century, detailed directions are given regarding the construction of various gods and goddesses. In the Pancharatra literature and in the Saiva sastras also elaborate directions were given regarding such constructions. Javanese art also shows numerous examples of the construction of the Hindu gods and goddesses. The Puranas are also replete with the descriptions of the Puranic deities, the incarnations are expressed through the conception of these divinities. But it is not possible within the scope of the present work to enter into any examination of these concepts. We can only say that the artists of Sanchi, Amaravati and Ajanta and their descendants utilised their knowledge of art in the creation of the Hindu deities. The art of Ellora and Mahabalipuram are excellent illustrations of it. In the south the worship of Siva was much in vogue as could well be illustrated by the Saivaite art of Madras. The figure of Nataraja, preserved in the

Madras Museum, clearly shows how the Hindus conceived the story of life and death in the eternal dance. In the one eternal consciousness the whole universe finds its basis and support; it is by its sprinkling, as it were, that the eternal process of creation and destruction is dancing in an ever-lasting wave. The human and the animal world are all held up within the vegetable and the inanimate kingdom and through them all the processes of creation and destruction, of joy and sorrow, run on in an ever-increasing manner. Through the varied forms of creation and destruction the eternal formless expresses itself in an eternal swing. With his left foot the Nataraja is dancing over death and in his right hand there is a tongue of fire and from the other hand he sends us the hope of fearlessness. His face is full of smile; through his dance the eternal flow of life and death is symbolised in the graceful wavy postures of the body; complete harmony is kept throughout the limbs in a graceful motion of the rhythm of the universe, the rhythm of light and shade, rhythm of death and life; fear and hope, joy and sorrow have mingled together in the eternal swing of life. In this way the eternal philosophy of the universal flux has found its expression in the conception of the Nataraja. The art of India had not only influenced Java and Ceylon but also Tibet, Turkisthan, Turfan, China and Japan.

LECTURE V

THEORIES OF INDIAN ART

THERE is no systematic work dealing with the philosophy of Indian art. Our knowledge of it has to be culled from scattered texts. On this subject I may draw attention to a remarkable passage of Dhammasangani which was written probably in the 3rd century B.C. and its commentary by Buddhaghosha in the 5th century A.D. It is said there that the mind is called chitta because it thinks and also because all moral and immoral actions and thoughts accumulate in it rapidly. For this reason chitta or mind is characterised as impure and pure, passionate or free. The desires, ready to transform themselves spontaneously into conscious will, remain hidden and buried, as it were, in the sub-conscious. As an example of it, one may take the art of pictorial or plastic representation. The painter at the time of painting has no other mental state than the formative spirit that translates itself externally into the pictorial representation. The painter first has a desire of creating forms. It is this internal state of the mind, the will to create, impregnated with the formative imagination and the intuition of the presentation, that can truly be called real art of painting. To have subjectively an intuitive image of the content and form of the picture is the internal side which completes itself objectively through harmonious lines and colours. But the mind is always in a state of flow and the response that it receives from its own creations as objectively translated stimulates the internal creative process through conscious and unconscious ways and helps the projection of further artistic representations. Thus

whatever is objectively projected in art is nothing else but this spontaneous activity of the mind. It is through the diversity of the mental flow that there is a diversity of the creative attitude of the mind which alone is responsible for the variety of forms of the objective art. Even if any body does not objectively translate his imaginative representation and creative intuition of the mind, it has still to be admitted that he is already an artist. For, it is his mental creative attitude, his imaginary representation and his mental intuition that constitute his art. Art is not something external, but it is spiritual and identical with the formative and creative spirit of the inner intuition. The objective expression is only an accidental translation of it ("Atthaśalini" p. 64). It is important to notice how the above opinion of Buddhaghosha so clearly anticipates the expressionist theory of art in formulating which in recent times Croce has attracted such attention for originality. In a few lines Buddhaghosha has expressed the theory even more perfectly than Croce has done in a big volume.

The mind is always in a state of flow. This flow has two constituent elements, the mental action and its results, the mental consciousness. This consciousness, in its objective side, is an external object and on the subjective side is consciousness. The consciousness of one moment dissolves itself into the flow and through the energy of the flow the consciousness of creative motion merges in the consciousness of the second moment. Thus the consciousness and the flow combine together in producing the third moment of consciousness and that again, being associated with the flow, produces the fourth moment and so on. What is manifested in and through the flow is called con-

sciousness and the external object is its objective echo. As the mind flows on, it carries within it not only the flow with which it is identical but also its product, the consciousness. What has been collected as a consequent product in one moment is transformed into the flow in the second moment. We thus perceive that each third moment is a synthesis of the first and the second—the thesis and the anti-thesis and each third moment, behaving as the first moment, creates the fourth moment as its anti-thesis with which it combines and produces the fifth moment. In this manner in and through the process of the mental flow through the whole life its product as consciousness dissolves in it, and is kept within it both as product and also as determinant of the flow. It is by this process that the mental flow grows richer and richer, more and more concrete, more and more diversified, and it is in this way alone that the heterogeneity and the complexity and the manifold character of the flow and its history can be explained. It is through this also that the creative function of the mind is continually realising itself in diverse manners. It may be held that the world of objects also in its own manner influences the mental flow, but no external object, unless and until it can become a constituent of the mental flow, can in any way determine its course. For this reason, the mental flow may be regarded as spontaneous and self-determined and whatever may be regarded as external to the mind is really already held within it. Unless this is done, the so-called externality has no meaning and significance and has no place in determining the inner spontaneous flow. It is this idea that Buddhaghosha sought to explain by an illustration of painting. He says that the real picture is nothing but

the mental one. An objection may be raised that the pictorial representation is a reality of the objective and the external world, whereas in the mental imagination the picture or the intuitive creative flow is a subjective state; so there is no way in which we can identify the two. The mind is in a continual state of flux, whereas the objective picture in the external world is a static entity. The reply to this is that in the mind of the creator there is the desire of intuitive creation. In consequence of this creative impulse there is produced a corresponding state of imagination, visualisation of the mental state, which is directly responsible for the objective representation of it through lines and colours. This creative impulse induces with it various suggestions which respond internally to the creative flow, and it is by this way alone that the creative process of the mind can realise itself. Even if the mental imagination and intuition had not been externally manifested, yet we should have considered that the artist could have attained his mission by the internal flux of the mind. What we experience externally is merely a translation of the mental conception and imagination. For this reason the mental picture can be regarded as true art even though it may not be translated in external forms in lines. The external representation is merely an imitation of the internal state. The real art of creation is the production of the mental states of intuitive representation as emerging out of the creative flow of the mind and determined by its creative self-flowing history.

From what has been said about the remarks of Buddhaghosha regarding pictorial art, some important conclusions can be deduced. Buddhaghosha speaks of

a creative moment of the mind which is at once intuitive and active, a consciousness of a peculiar kind associated with dynamism. He thinks that such a state of mind is the first pre-condition of aesthetic creation. This state being associated with art creation may well be designated as an aesthetic state. The product of the creative activity, at least so far as it is external, has hardly the importance that the inner activity has. So the sense of beauty applies primarily to this internal state constituted of an intuitive apperception associated with a dynamism and involving ideas, thoughts, emotions and imaginary representations. It is this inner creation which we can primarily call the 'beautiful'. The term 'beautiful' can be applied to the external translations of this internal state only in a remote manner. Secondly, the aesthetic state of mind may indeed induce joy at a later moment or even at the same moment, but it is not necessarily identical with joy. Thirdly, aesthetic apperception or the apperception of beauty is identical with the creation of beauty. Since the term 'art' can be applied only to the internal aesthetic state, its application to external translations of such state as a painting or a sculpture is only a projection of the idea of beauty to a field to which it does not naturally belong. Fourthly, since the mind or chitta is always in a state of flow, the aesthetic state created by the flow of a moment becomes integrally associated with the successive aesthetic states created by the continuance of the same flow, so that the aesthetic states of the different moments being conceived and carried forth and entirely related together as a concrete whole, serve to produce the entire picture as a whole. Thus the concrete picture is not the result of one moment's direct intuition.

It is a product of the co-operation of the creative activity of the various moments and their intuitional products connected together in order of harmony with one another by the natural determination of the creative flows.

Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy speaking of the creation of art by the Indian artists described the same in rather a mystical manner. What he says comes virtually to this: the artist sits in meditation and purges his mind of all disturbing elements and concentrates like a Yogin on the subject of his creation. The result of such a concentration is that his mind leaves the world of forms and soars high in the world of the formless. When the mind is thus merged in the formless, the impregnated desire of creating forms draws spontaneously from out of the formless the desired form, the deity associated with its particular posture, gesture, colour and his whole mind, becomes suffused as it were, with the radiant form of the deity which emerges from the depth of this consciousness and fills the canvas of his mind. The next duty of the artist is to transfer the picture of the mental canvas to the external canvas of the matter.

Coomaraswamy says that he has drawn the above-mentioned idea from Foucher's "L'Iconographie bouddhique de l' Inde" second part, published in 1905, p. 211. Dr. Benoytosh Bhattacharya also gives a similar description in page 169 of his Iconography in connection with the worship of a certain deity. Both these texts seem to have been taken from "Srikhasarpana-lokesvara-sadhana" by Anupama Rakshita, but both these texts refer to the meditation of deities which has no bearing on the manner in which an artist should create his art. But though Coomaraswamy is wrong

in interpreting this scriptural text, so far as its meaning and application are concerned, he seems to be right substantially with regard to this view. It cannot be gainsaid that intuitive contemplation is the most essential element for creation of a first class work of art. Thus Coomaraswamy says in his "Transformation of Nature in Art" (p. 6) that, "The whole process up to the point of manufacture belongs to the established order of personal devotions in which worship is paid to an image mentally conceived."

But though Coomaraswamy's citations are not quite apposite, yet the fact that an artist should contemplate deeply as in a state of trance the object of his creation, and that the defects of his art would often be due to the weakness and insufficiency of his power of meditation or contemplation has been referred to, by at least some Indian thinkers. The "Shukra-niti-sara" says that the delineation of a statue of a deity is to be found in the contemplative perfection of it. It is only when the form to be translated is ideally grasped in a contemplative mental intuition that a translation of it in plastic forms through objective materials is at all possible. An artist can never be successful in his superb creative activity by objective imitation, but can only do so if he is able to enter into a trance by fixing his mind on the subject of his creation. Kalidasa in describing the painting of the picture of Malavika by the king, describes the king as criticising the picture drawn by himself, who says that though he (king) had drawn the likeness of his beloved, yet grace or sweetness was embarrassingly missing. In describing the reason of it the king says that he had a lapse in his contemplative state and that it was this momentary lapse of meditation or contemplation

that should be regarded as responsible for the loss of grace and sweetness from the picture.

The uninitiated common people, and sometimes even wise persons, regard the work of art as consisting merely of imitation and we find even Plato decries art as being more or less a low profession as it does quite a useless thing, that is, it attempts merely to imitate nature. But such an assertion is obviously wrong, for even in the case of drawing portraits, the artist, should he be a true one, tries to grasp first of all in his mind's eye the character of the subject, that is, the person whom he wishes to portray. It is by concentrating his mind on the most important features of the object of representation that he can successfully portray the picture. In describing the nature of contemplation and meditation Patanjali says that that mental state which becomes in form and character identical with the object of meditation is called samadhi. In the state of samadhi the mind does not flicker, nor does it pass from one object to another, but it shows itself steadily as identified with the object which it was contemplating. No other content but that of the object of meditation is present in the mind at the time. This content reveals itself so steadily that the whole truth about it shines forth as being one with the mind. For this reason, there is no self-consciousness and no splitting up of consciousness between the knower, the known and knowledge; and this state in which the knower and the known merge, as it were, shines forth as knowledge. There is a difference between the view of the school of art of which we find reference in the "Shukra-niti-sara" and other relevant Hindu scriptural texts and the view of art propounded by Buddhaghosha. In the Hindu school as

well as in the Buddhist school one idea appears to be common. Buddhaghosha said that it was the inner mind and the mental picture that could be regarded as the true art and artist. In the Hindu view also, we find that the external picture can only be made from the internal picture in which the artist had merged himself. Here also we find the unity between the art and the artist. In this part, therefore, there is an agreement between the Hindu and the Buddhist view. But the Buddhist thinks that it is the internal picture that alone can be called the true art, while the external picture made in imitation of it is only the external translation. The Hindu view held that though in the preliminary state the art and the artist must be unified in a state of trance, yet it is only when the internal picture is reproduced outside that the true picture can be formed. The inner representation must be transported outside.

When the artist is not sufficiently gifted to enter into a trance-like state to visualise and portray the nature of a deity, the worshipper is directed to remain occupied for a long time in a particular type of mental attitude as a result of which he could, in his dream, experience the form of the intended deity. He then directed the artist to construct the image in accordance with his mental image of the deity as perceived by him in his dream. The "Shilparatna" and the Pancharatra works deal with the processes of such a transformation of the mental image into the external figure. The relevant point, worthy of our consideration in this connection, is to be found in the fact that the intuitional apperception, as revealed in meditation or dream, can transform itself into the language of the artist on a canvas or a piece of stone only when

the mind of such a person is already well-ordered by the correct assimilation of the artist's language. In other words, it is only such minds that are so trained that can observe correctly the exact feautres of the objects of the world and can store in their memory the observed relations in an unfailing manner. Their fingers move automatically under the guidance of the mental image and are trained to express in terms of lines and colours the suggestion of the mind that can utilise in the production of art the revelation or discovery of the artistic image which they could visualise and intuit in the depths of their contemplation. A worshipper may himself visualise the form of a deity in the depths of his meditation, but he is unable to reproduce in his conscious plane the exact form of the intuited deity and his fingers are unable to express in the gestures of lines and colours the mental image with which his mind is full. Thus it is only the trained artist, trained in powers of observation, trained in correctly reproducing the same and well-equipped with the method in which such mental reproductions can be expressed externally in the language of art, that can represent the inner vision in the spiritual essence of art through stones, colours and lines. It is again and again emphasised in the "Silparatna" that the artist must have keen powers of observation of nature including the inanimate plant and animal life and he must train his memory in such a manner that the impressions of his subconscious appreciation, consequent upon observation, can be easily brought on the plane of ordinary consciousness and these again may be expressed in the plastic language of art. It is again when the artist is equipped with these indispensable powers that his contemplated vision can

descend in and through himself into the external world. The "Silparatna" says that not only the visual images are to be stored and utilised in the creation of art, but even sound images, rhythms and tones may be stored in memory to be transformed into visual images by a process of deep contemplation.

It is in this way that the Indian artists represented in visual forms of deities the various kinds of musical tones and symphonies. Judged from this point of view there is a number of important conditions which are indispensable for the production of art. Firstly, the artist must carefully observe all natural forms; secondly, he must be able to observe carefully the mutual proportions and harmonies of the many features of the objects; thirdly, he must be able to observe an object apart from the environment and must be able to note the difference produced thereby; fourthly, he must train his memory in such a manner that the observations of the past may easily, correctly and spontaneously be brought before the conscious plane; fifthly, he must train his eyes and his fingers to express, in terms of artistic language of lines, colours, plastic forms, the mental image that seeks expression; sixthly, he must be able to plunge into a meditation and contemplation so that in the depths of his mind he may feel the concrete touch of the objects of his representation such that his whole personality, his joy and his will may be interfused with his creation in a concrete manner so that he may gradually give external form to this concrete reality held within his mind; and seventhly, the artist's mind must comprehend the true meaning of art or the flow of life manifesting itself through plants, animals and men in a complete harmony and consonance. It is by the com-

bination of these conditions that an artist can attain success.

The scriptures enjoin another very important condition for the production of successful art. The artist must above all be moral. He must purge his mind of all impure passions that blur his view; unless purity of mind is attained it is impossible for him to merge deeply into his contemplation in and through which alone can the intuitive picture be realised. It is for this reason that the Pancharatra texts advise the performance of various religious ceremonies before the artist undertakes his work. In this connection it is worth making a reference to another school of art whose views were inspired by the Sankhya School of Philosophy. This school thought that within the plastic material, be it colour, stone or clay, all the desired forms of art lie hidden and buried. The artist by his contemplation discovers the manner by which these potential forms can find their expression by his endeavour. It is supposed that guided by inner teleology the plastic material—the guna-reals transform themselves in the manifold forms of the universe. The artist must follow the course of nature. He must be in sympathy with this inner law of teleology that binds man with the animal, vegetable and the inanimate world, and he must discover by his contemplation, the inner secret of this teleology as transformation, and aim at the expression of man with the co-operation of the life that flows through nature. In man also the higher teleology works towards the expression of his thoughts and feelings and ultimately for the expression of the pure holiness that is the essence of the being of man. The art becomes more and more supreme as the artist is able to give an ex-

pression to the human thoughts and feelings through the plastic materials and ultimately can successfully represent the essential spirit of man as in peace with nature and yet transcending it.

The "Ishvara-samhita", a Pancharatra work, laid great emphasis on the maintenance of proportion and due relation of parts to whole as an indispensable condition of the production of beauty (saundarya). It makes a distinction between beauty (saundarya) and grace (lavanya). The harmony of proportions produces beauty, but lavanya is something which is not necessarily a product of such beauty. They may exist independently of each other. The beauty here referred to is the formal beauty on which the Greeks laid so much emphasis, but the grace or the lavanya is the expression of the inner man, his thoughts and feelings and his holiness or spirituality. Thus, following the Sankhya theory of art, we get two stages in its development. In the first stage, the artist creates likeness or the outer expression. In the second stage, the artist manifests through his art the inner expression of man which is his ideal. In the Sankhya theory the evolution of the universe reaches its culmination in the production of man. After the production of man the whole nature of the animate and the inanimate world co-operate together for giving scope to the moral struggle of man by which he is ultimately liberated from nature. In the theory of art inspired by it we see the same process. By observing the external relations and proportions, the artist creates the external likeness, but the task of the artist is not finished there. Whether the artist produces a creeper, or a tree, a landscape or a man, his ultimate object is to show its spiritual essence. In the case of natural

objects such as creepers, trees, hills and dales, the object of the artist is to show that they are co-operating to bring out the inner expression of man and that therein lies their essence. In the artistic production of man, the object of the artist is to manifest the inner feelings, thoughts and ideals and ultimately to give expression to his inner spirituality in such a manner that though the figure may be carved out of stones or painted in colours, the spirituality is expressed in an emphatic way and it stands liberated from the materials which served to stand as the basis for its expression.

The Indians developed almost a complete language of art and the relevant works dealing with the subject such as Bharata's "Natya-sastra", Nandikesvara's "Abhinaya-darpana" describe various kinds of glances to suggest different expressions of mind as also the various gestures of the body, postures of the hands, the positions of the fingers, the inclinations of the hands and the feet in such an elaborate manner that by an assemblage of them an artist could very well express the inner expression of the man. The works of literary art deal with the necessity of the expression of the dominant emotion of man through the intermediation of passing emotions which, though transient, can by their joint co-operation manifest the dominant emotion called rasa. The object of art is the manifestation of this rasa.

We now pass on to some other important aspects regarding the joy of appreciating art. We have only said that the artist when engaged in creation is transfused with the joy which runs in and through his creative activity. But it is not only that the artist feels joy in his creation, but observers also feel joy

when they look at a superb work of art. The "Samarangana-sutradhara" in describing the nature of prema-rasa says that the joy that we feel in meeting our dear friends or in attaining prosperity, which gives shiver and a thrill, is called the prema-rasa. This rasa may be associated with the attainment or fulfilment of selfish desires or it may be entirely devoid of them. It is curious that this rasa is not admitted by the critics of dramatic art. It is said to be particularly applicable to the appreciation of pictorial or plastic art. In dramatic representation, the joy that is felt by a lover on meeting his beloved after a long time has been called the joy of love or sringara. But prema-rasa is a wider word and it includes the joy that is felt by a person when he perceives anything that is dear to him. The joy of love expresses itself equally between the lover and the beloved; whereas the prema-rasa is an one-sided expression of joy on the part of a person on his perceiving or realising something that is dear to him. The work of art can, on the one hand, express the joy of a person who is wanted to be represented and, on the other hand, it may produce joy in the mind of the person who observes it and feels a unique thrill in his mind. We have seen that the "Ishvara-samhita" says that a figure endowed with beauty and grace produces joy within us. Thus we have here a pronouncement regarding the joy that works of art can produce which is held to be different in nature from other types of joy. This joy is not a mere transient feeling, but it is a transcendent state which is not limited by consideration of time and space or self-interest of any description. In enjoying beauty a man may so lose himself in the work of art that he can become one, as it were, with

the object of beauty before him. The work of art seems to enter into his very personality and induce in him the rise of various passing emotions through which the joy of beauty is expressed. This can be designated as the aesthetic joy or the joy of art. In delineating the dramatic sentiments of joy a poet must first create the environmental surroundings, the setting which is favourable for the manifestation of the intended feeling. He must also delineate the conditions by which the hero of the drama can experience a particular kind of emotion—be it love, anger, etc. The poet must also describe the passing inner feelings which feed the dominant emotions and he must also describe the external expressions by which the mind of the hero can be understood by the audience who may thereby enter into the spirit of the hero and become one with his feelings and participate in his emotions. In the case of art, the setting is to be found in the content of the pictorial or plastic representation in the way of trees, creepers, flowers, animals and other men and women who surround the central figure and help to produce the conditions and the excitant causes that are favourable for the experiencing of the emotions intended by the artist. These emotions must also be expressed in such a manner in and through the environmental atmosphere that it may be easy for the observer to understand the meaning and import of the art and identify himself with the principal content and participate in the emotions of the artist through the language of art by which the artist has spoken of his sentiments.

Thus, if we take for instance the figure of Durga with her hands holding diverse weapons, sitting on the lion and fighting with the demon, we find that the

quiet and easy heroism of the deity is balanced against the demonic anger of the Asura. The heroism of the goddess is evident from the ease with which she is handling the weapons and the consciousness of superiority over the demon whose power of mischief seems to have been very well-conceived by the deity. Here the anger of the demon provokes the heroism of the deity and the heroism of the deity provokes the anger of the demon. In the encircling band over the head of the deity the heavens are represented from where the gods are watching the terrible fight between the goddess and the demon. The deity, therefore, is roused into her heroism because her actions are being watched with fear, anxiety, approbation and encouragement by gods who are terribly afraid of the demon. These facts offer a setting and also become exciting conditions for the heroism of the goddess. The military posture of the deity as well as her bright eyes of anger are the external expressions (anubhava). The deity and the demon mutually generate heroism and anger respectively. Thus the general conditions of dramatic art or the art of literature for the expression of emotion are well-satisfied here. In the images of Durga, prevalent in Bengal, there are four additional figures, of Kartikeya figuring as a dandy and riding on a peacock and Ganesha sitting on a mouse ready for a marriage ceremony, as also there are the figures of Jaya or Vijaya or Lakshmi and Sarasvati as they are called, where they are quite unnecessary for the scene. The figures must have crept in at some later date, for there is not the slightest mention of them in the Chandi. If we compare the Bengali Durga with four additional figures with the Durga of the 7th century (Stuart Bridge collection No. 72) the

difference is immediately noticed. The 7th century stone image is an excellent representation of the heroism of Durga. In Indian art-theories a distinction is always made between heroism and anger. Anger is blind, senseless rage, devouring more the person who is angry than capable of being transformed into an effective energy for the destruction of the enemy. Heroism on the other hand is impregnated with courage and exertion and adamantine resolution, a determination for unflinching and continued labour and work, while the mind is in a state of balance and is never deluded by false perspectives. Our discussion of the meaning of the figure of Durga exemplifies the fact that the principles formulated by the dramatic critics were also followed in plastic or pictorial representation. There is another school of interpreters who hold that the function of art is imitation. This school is typically represented by Sri Sankuka. But though Sri Sankuka admits that the vocation of art is to imitate nature, yet the product of imitation occupies a unique category by itself. Thus when a horse is drawn on a piece of paper, this horse is not identical with the actual horse. Yet it is not so different from the actual horse that one does not recognise it as being such. To call a painted horse a horse is not to speak in a false manner, yet it is impossible to identify the drawing with the actual object. Thus the art, though a product of imitation, is yet by itself a unique thing. These writers try to explain the rousing of dramatic emotions in performances of the stage on the analogy of pictorial or plastic representation. They think that the actor imitates the feelings of the hero of a drama and it is by imitating the actor again that the audience experiences the same emotions.

Abhinavagupta combats the view of Sri Sankuka and holds that there is no imitation in the case of a dramatic representation either on the part of the actor or the audience. He thinks that the emotion of one person being his internal affair cannot be imitated by others. The emotion in the mind of the audience is generated independently by the representation of the situation together with the exciting conditions and the expressions of emotions on the part of the heroes and the heroines. But whatever that may be, the distinction drawn by Abhinavagupta between the manner in which the audience or the reader enjoys the dramatic play or a drama and the manner in which one feels the joy of art is hardly supportable. Abhinavagupta says that when a picture of fear is drawn by a poet as in the case of the deer who is being pursued by the king, the deer is not a particular deer limited by time or space or any physical conditions; but it is the universal deer which will present itself to any reader at any time or any place. But if that is so with reference to the poet's creation, it is the same with the creation of the artist also. If the artist has drawn the same picture of a deer running away from the pursuer overcome by fear, then that deer would also be beyond all time and beyond all conditions. But in addition to the fact that the art of plastic representation or portrayal shares with the dramatic art the same claim of conveying emotion to the observer, there is another special point in which the plastic art has the farthest scope of producing joy. Apart from the fact that the latter involves an expression of inner emotions with which it invests the observer, there is also a feeling of joy produced by the harmony and proportion of different limbs or parts of the work of art. We are

used from our childhood to certain kinds of proportion and symmetry, harmony and order among the objects of nature which lie impressed in our subconscious in such a manner that, when we perceive objects of nature, the perception of the same type of proportion and symmetry produces a sense of consonance by virtue of which a feeling of joy arises in the mind. This joy has no definite content or idea behind it. It can, therefore, be designated as a special kind of feeling which we may call aesthetic joy. This appeal of the formal beauty was thus particularly observed by the Indian artists and they regarded it as belonging to a separate category and called it prema-rasa. Thus Roger Fry in speaking of the picture "La Blonde est dormie" says "In the Blonde est dormie belonging to M. Matini, Courbet for once was true to his principles and has accepted the thing seen in its true setting, and here we are in the world of pure imagination. However realistic this is, we are not tempted ever to refer to what is outside the picture. The plastic unity holds us entirely within its own limits, because, at every point it gives an exhilarated and surprised satisfaction. Every thing here is transmuted into plastic terms and finds therein so clear a justification that we are not impelled to go beyond them or to fill them out, as it were, by thinking of the model who posed more than half a century ago to M. Courbet in Paris or of other woman whatever." ("Transformation" —p. 37). Thus we see that the joy arising from formal beauty has also the same characteristic as the joy that is induced by the expression of emotions or ideas. The formally beautiful also transcends the limits of time and space and stands as a symbol of the universal expression of beauty of harmony that fills our mind

consciously and without reason with a sense of joy.

Indian philosophy classifies the ways of knowledge according to the manner in which knowledge is produced and according to the difference in the content. These ways of knowledge have been described as being perception (pratyaksha), inference (anumana), analogy or upamana and so forth. The way of knowledge that has been described as upamana may be illustrated thus—a man who has never seen a bison, but has been told that the bison was like a cow, may go to the forest and meet a bison and having seen it, remembers the instruction that bison was an animal which resembled a cow and comes to the conclusion that the unknown animal that he has met is a bison. Here though the person sees the bison, he does not see the cow at the time. For this reason, his conclusion that the animal is a bison is not a perceptual one. The perceptual figure before him is compared with the impressional figure of the cow and thereby the unknown animal is recognised as a bison. The most important element in this process of knowledge called the upamana is that here there is a recognition of knowledge of similarity. Knowledge of similarity belongs to a separate category, a fundamental function of the mind irreducible into any other category of knowledge. For this reason, the intuition of similarity has been recognised as a separate source of knowledge.

The intuition of similarity plays an important part in the creation of art. The artist, like other men, has observed the things of nature and the impressions of these things are stored in his mind though their details may sometimes be missing. When the artist tries to draw a creeper or a leaf, a horse or a cow, he tries to realise it in his mind and to bring out from his sub-

conscious the main features of those objects and tries to represent the scene in lines or curves on a paper or any plastic material. As he tries to do this, he compares the impression of his mind with the actual thing and criticises and corrects himself either by looking at a model or by refreshing his memory by energetic efforts, and draws the picture. The picture that is drawn is not identical with the actual object nor is it different from it. It is neither false nor true. When another observer perceives the work of art he, also, in his mind perceives the similarity and recognises it as a horse or a cow. The creative process is thus a process which is reverse to the process of appreciation. In the creative function the forms that are held within the mind are made to run out of it and represented in material form; whereas in the appreciative process the material forms in lines or plastic curves which are seen outside, are taken back in the mind and compared with the sub-conscious impressions. From our infancy we are perceiving objects of nature and though we may have forgotten the details, the proportion of parts to a whole and the lineal proportions of features get so impressed in the mind that the mind is habituated to think unconsciously or sub-consciously in those terms and to regard those proportions as the normal standard of the diverse relations of parts to a whole. The contour and the lineal features of a cow are so impressed in the mind that it is only in the body of a cow that we are prepared to accept their harmony. The same lineal features and contour will be remembered quite in a harmonious relation when applied to the body of a horse. Again, if we ignore the details, all animals possess such a similarity of forms that it is possible to draw a mythical animal corres-

ponding to which there is no actual animal, but which can still be recognised as being an animal. In our pictorial decorations, we draw the figures of leaves, creepers and trees corresponding to which there is no actual creepers, leaves or trees in the world of nature. But still they are easily recognised as being creepers, trees, or leaves. There are decorative forms which cannot be called a creeper or a leaf, but which on the whole, imitate the curve folds and features of creepers in such a manner that they produce a joy in us by their harmony. We thus see that our mind, on the one hand, is impressed with the spatial lineal features associated with particular objects, and on the other hand, with the forms and a general harmony of feature and lines of the animal, vegetable and the inanimate world. It appears as if the mind is woven through and through by a net-like structure of diverse harmonious blending of lines and colours associated either in connection with spatial objects or in a general manner with the objects of the plant or the animal world. We perceive thus that there are gradations in our knowledge of similarity, yet the knowledge of similarity is not a mere abstraction of the conscious mind; but it has a definite content and reality with which it binds the movement and forms the structure of the mind. As this knowledge of similarity in the features of objects of the world of nature has a structural content, it is difficult for the mind to escape from its bondage. The result is that whenever the mind finds in the objective world, either in nature or in art, relations of features which are consonant with its structures, it finds relief and scope for self-assertion. A recognition of the unity between the internal and the external and sub-conscious impression is expressed in a

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Archaeological Survey of India : Figs. 4-7, 10, 15-19.

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Indian Museum, Calcutta : Figs. 1, 11, 13.

Mathura Museum : Figs 5, 8.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston : Fig. 3.

Sarnath Museum : Figs. 2, 9.

Patna Museum : Fig. 12.



1. DREAM OF MAYADEVI : BHARHUT



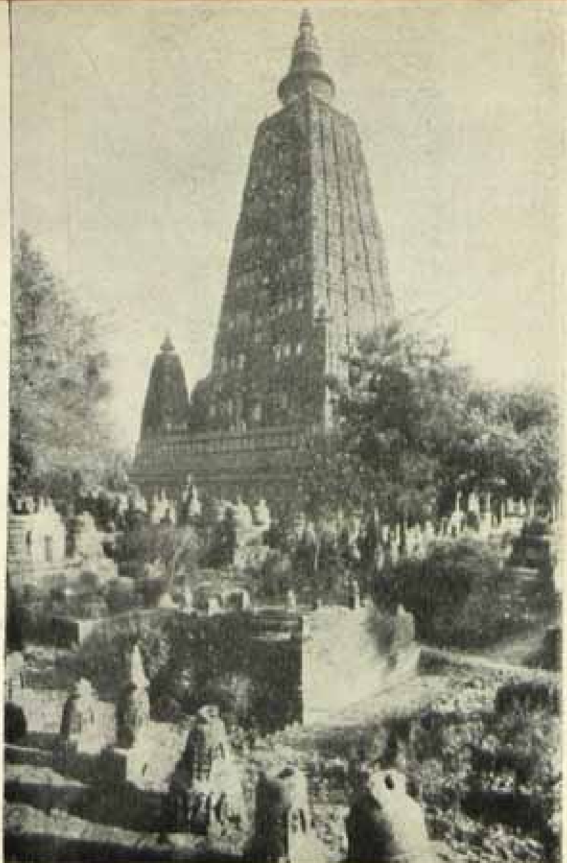
2. LION CAPITOL :
SARNATH



3. *GANGA : VESNAGAR*



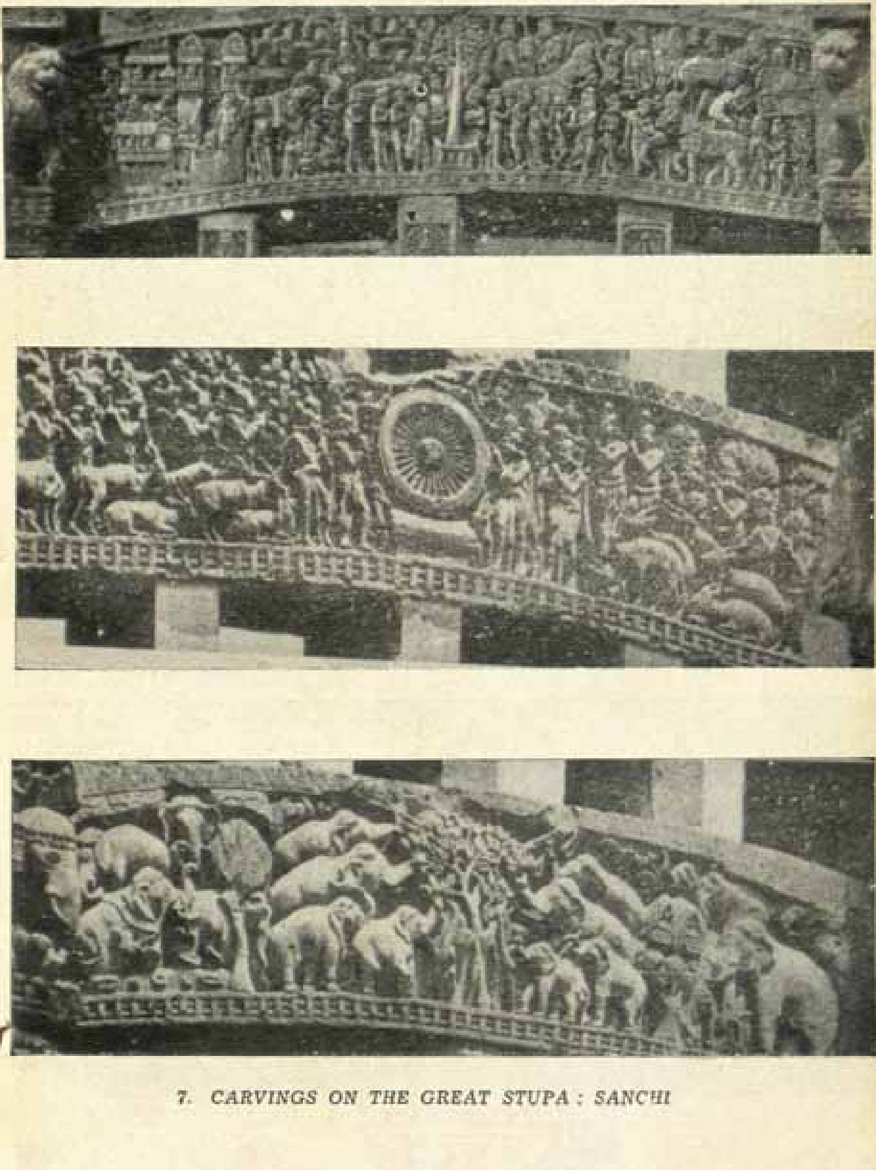
4. *ANANTASAYI VISHNU : DEOGARH*



5. MAHABODHI TEMPLE : BODH-GAYA



6. AJANTA PILLAR : CAVE NO. 24



7. *CARVINGS ON THE GREAT STUPA : SANCHI*



8. BUDDHA : MATHURA



9. BUDDHA : SARNATH



10. BODHI TREE SHRINE : SANCHI



11, 12, 13. YAKSHINIS : *BHARHUT, DIDARGANJ AND VESNAGAR*



14. AMARAVATI SCULPTURE



15. DANCING APSARA : SITTANNAVASAL

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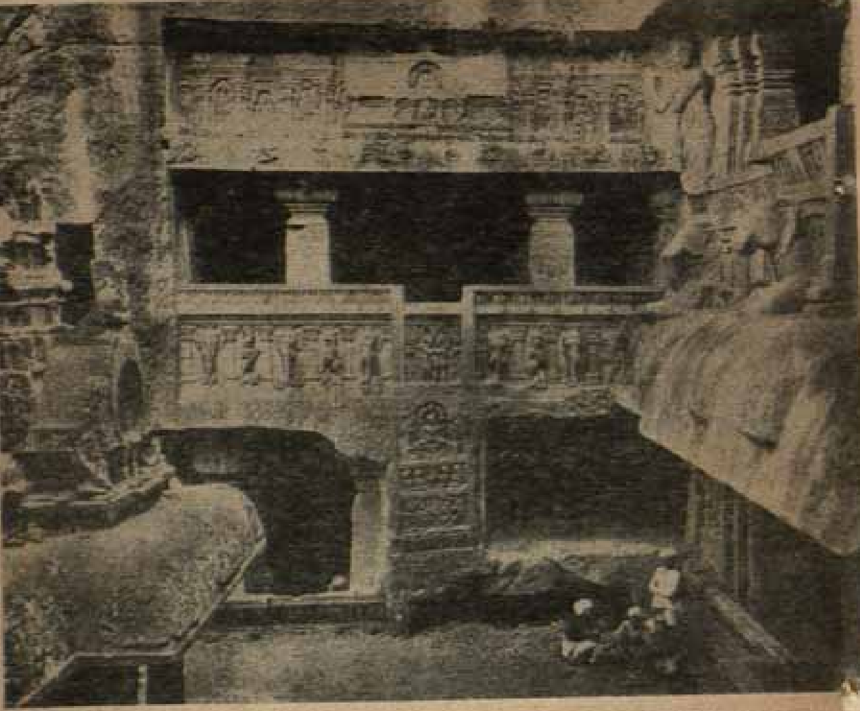
DHARMA-RAJA RATHA : MAHABALI-PURAM



17

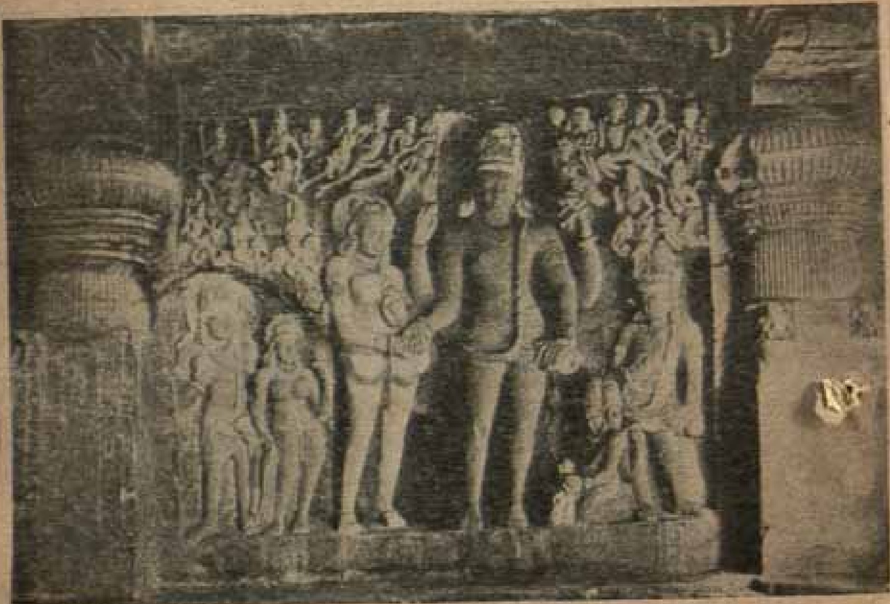
MAHISHA-MARDANI : MAHABALI-PURAM





18. INDRA SABHA : ELLORA

19. KALYANASUNDARA : ELLORA



particular mental state, which we call the aesthetic state which is associated generally with a sense of exhilaration and a feeling of joy. This joy that is associated with beauty is thus due to the self-affiliating, self-recognising and self-realising activity of the mind in the objective world. It is for this reason that it is impossible to define the unique content of an aesthetic state. The aesthetic state is a state in which the structural content of the mind which fails to make itself felt in the conscious plane realises unconsciously its unity with the objective world. The spatial relations and the relations of volume which form an integral part of the sense of harmony in plastic creations, have their basis in psychological volumes of the mind which enter into the very content of the structure of the mind. In addition to this, even in the passing thoughts and emotions of the mind, in our striving for ideals and our volitional activities, in our mental images, either worn out or definite, unformed or formed, complete or incomplete, certain psychological volumes are experienced which are not identical with the actual spatial volumes of the spatial world. But the former are somehow connected with the latter. The psychological volumes are experienced in and through the structure of the mind which is largely impregnated with the objective spatial volumes. We have said before that the symmetry of art that was known to the Greeks was based upon the proportionate harmony of polygonal volumes, whereas the symmetry of art, with which the Chinese were conversant, were proportional to elliptical volumes. As contrasted with these the Indian artists often drew their figures of gods and goddesses and of superhuman beings to whom they attributed, not in the actual volumes of the external world

but the psychological volumes which were experienced in the mind. These psychological volumes can neither be designated as polygonal nor as elliptical, but may yet be said to have such an intimate relation with them that it was possible to represent them in the actual plastic volumes of stones or clay.

The perception of the artist so differs from the perception of an ordinary man that, while the ordinary man delights in the practical utility of the objects and obviously cares for nothing else, the artist finds his pleasures in noting the features of the objects, their lineal and voluminal proportions, the symmetry of forms and the manifold relations in which the parts stand to the whole. It is for this reason that the structure of the mind of the artist is more definite, more concrete, more alert to the realm of symmetry and harmony of the objects of nature. One conclusion follows irresistibly from the psychological interpretation of beauty and aesthetic joy and that is the reality of relations. Relations are not mere abstractions, mere phantoms of appearance as the idealist would say, but they form the definite structure of the mind without which the operation of the mind in the normal manner would be impossible. The mind is in a state of flow, and wherever in nature it can find its flow unobstructed, there is joy; but when this flow is obstructed there is suffering and an effort to overcome the obstacles, and as a result there is pain. There are other cases in which the element of obstruction is subordinate to the element of passivity or favourableness to the flow of the mind, and in such cases the tender obstruction excites the flow and there is a feeling of newness associated with joy. Hegel thought that the flow of mind is possible by the opposition of a thesis and

an antithesis; but Croce in his "What is living and what is dead of Hegel" has effectively shown the fallacy of Hegel and has resolved the oppositeness into distinctness. Thus when the mind in its flow finds something which is different or distinct from its structural nature, it cannot swallow or digest this and there is a feeling of repugnance which we designate as ugly. In considering this flow of mind we have left out of consideration the necessities of our practical and biological nature which are associated with self-interest. The realm of art is unassociated with anything which has any practical significance or which caters to our biological or moral needs. The harmony that the mind notices in the objective world is not really an objective character, but is an inner character of the mind itself. Beauty thus is a spiritual event and it is only in a secondary manner that it is referred to the objective world. The mind which is not practised to note similarities in a particular way and the structure of which is formed in a one-sided manner would be unable to appreciate works of art which are regarded as beautiful by other minds. The facts that works of Indian art could not be appreciated as having any worth or significance by the European connoisseurs of art a century ago, and the fact that such important connoisseurs of art in the present generation as Roger Fry or Laurence Binyon are setting a high value to it, illustrate the point of our contention. Though in the appraisal of beauty we refer to an objective world, yet the notion of beauty is an emergent spiritual event.

The harmony and symmetry which form an indispensable condition of beauty is an inner creation of our own minds. Even when we are normally engaged

with the practical aspects of things or their activity or even when we do not carefully observe the things around us, we are being gradually impressed by the forms and features of these things. There is an unconscious selective process by virtue of which the mind gathers within itself the relations, order and symmetry of the form of things though it may not be practically interested in doing so. These impressions forming the structure of the mind are revived when such a symmetry or order is perceived in a work of art or in nature. But the artist, who finds special joy in noting the harmony and order in nature, takes a keen delight and interest in noting them and trains his mind in such a manner that he can reproduce them within himself, even without any external excitants. Special kinds of symmetry and order are particular objects of nature, living or non-living. It is well-known that while an ordinary person cannot form a mental image of the commonest objects which he might have perceived million times, the artist has a trained memory by virtue of which he can reproduce before his mind the features of things which he saw only once in a hurried manner. The artist in his contemplation draws desired forms and symmetries from out of the depths of his mind and by pondering and meditating over them translates them into the language of plastic or pictorial art. The observer of such art finds aesthetic joy as it induces and awakens subconsciously within him similar notions with which he was unknowingly impressed upon.

We have said above that this joy, whether of art-creation or of appreciation, forms a category by itself and has been designated as prema-rasa by the Indian artist. By such a contemplation the artist draws from

within himself the materials for external expression and, as he tries to express the intuited image or to transform the inner expression into the outer, the lines and modellings that are created by him suggest and awaken within, further inner perception and images which help him in reviewing and correcting his external creation. Croce had practically ignored this important part of the artist's creation. According to him, the artist in his contemplation intuits the entire work of art and then translates it on a canvas or a piece of stone. The operation of the conscious or logical mind was practically ignored by him. According to the present theory, the importance of the intuitive part is not ignored, but it is maintained that it is not the intuitive part alone which is competent to produce the work of art. The artist must be well-versed in the sciences of mathematics, anatomy, etc. and as he tries to give external form to the image of his dhyana or intuitive contemplation, the external expression of them in lines or plastic modellings again suggest to his conscious mind the various principles of science and art, which he had mastered. It is in accordance with them that the artist criticises his own work and tries to perfect it by the contributions of his conscious knowledge, logical, scientific, anatomical and the like. In the creation of art there must be a perfect unity between the contribution of intuitive contemplation or dhyana and the practical control of the hand and the fingers for representing the inner expression in the language of art. The contributions of intuition again must be prepared to accept the suggestions of the conscious mind and the conscious memory trained by study and experience; and the logical function of the mind must also operate

harmoniously to correct or perfect the different contributions as they coalesce together to form the unity that is sought to be expressed in the production of a perfect art. Thus in the production of a perfect art the intuitive, the cognitive and the restrictive functions of the mind must be in complete organic unity in the interest of the concrete whole, the work of art. This spiritual or the mental side of art must also be indispensably and invariably associated and co-ordinated with the muscular movement of the hand and fingers which must previously attain a training to express the mental elements in external forms and external language of art by a long and steady experience. In the work of art, therefore, not only the organic unity of the various functions of the mind is required, but this inner unity must further be unified with the corporal movement of the motor and sensory muscles of nerves. Thus, in the production of a work of art, a unity of mind and body is invariably underlined as an indispensable condition. It is because the creative activity of art involves within itself a concrete unity of the mind and body in their various functions that it is possible to represent the spirit through matter by way of plastic materials and to return to the spirit through the language of matter. The semi-circle created by the creative artist is completed by the art connoisseur who completes the other half of the circle by returning to the spirit through the language of the matter. The artist must within himself complete the circle and while creating the art enjoy it in the capacity of a critic of art. It is by the contemplating function of an art-connoisseur that the artist can place himself objectively outside his art and behave as a representative of the observer and ascertain whether

it is possible to return to the spirit by the language of art and thereby determine whether the plastic language that he has used has been universally expressive or not.

It is for this reason that the Indian scriptures on art and art authorities laid great emphasis on the necessity of careful observation and training of the fingers and hand for attaining the dexterity for giving expression to the mental image. It is said in the "Samarangana-sutradhara" that the artist must be a vastly learned and cultured man and must attain a practical dexterity of using his fingers and hand in right manner.

The Samarangana-sutradhara regards the following as the indispensable qualities of a good artist: (1) powers of intuitive contemplation or mediation (prajna), (2) powers of careful observation, (3) technical skill of the hand through long practice, (4) learning particularly the science of metre or balance, (5) anatomy of the different bodies of animals and men, both in movement and in steadiness and under the influence of diverse passions, (6) ready intelligence (pratyutpannamatitva), (7) self-control and character.

It is said that good and noble character with great powers of self-control is absolutely necessary for the making of a good artist. For, unless such a character is formed, the artist swayed by passions can never attain the concentration necessary for contemplative intuition.

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THE AUTHOR

Late Surendra Nath Dasgupta was one of the foremost philosophers of the modern times, known for his versatility and scholarship. Born of a highly cultured family of Barishal in 1885, he was educated in Calcutta and Cambridge. He held important posts in the Indian Educational Service and became the George V Professor of Mental and Moral Science, Calcutta University. In 1945, he was nominated Professor of Sanskrit in Edinburgh University. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, London.

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